



Dr. Justin Bazan

BEING A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR

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Minutes

Intro: Dana Beards

Success looks different for everyone. So everyone needs to decide what success is for themselves and this is what the meeting is really about. For Dr. Bazan, it's about practicing the way he wants and also having the freedom to travel and share his success with others.

About Dr. Bazan:

Dr. Justin Bazan is a successful optometrist who came from a small town called Utica, in New York. The city used to be a large textile producer but since that has been outsourced to Asia now, the town was abandoned by many. He realized he too needed to get out of there himself if he ever wanted to be successful. He attended the Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas for his undergraduate education. Later, he attended SUNY, where he often found himself in the back row in the lecture halls where he thinks his entrepreneurial spirit began. He then graduated in 2004.

After graduating, he realized he didn't have very many connections and that he hadn't networked enough as he should have. He began looking for the highest paying jobs he could find on the "Help Wanted" ads. Eventually he started working for the chain Cohens Fashion Optical. His job was refracting to solely sell glasses. Although these chains seem to offer the most amount of money initially, you don't really have a lot of say in how you practice and how you want to provide service to your patients. However you do gain some experience in sales, optical, merchandising, management, and being quick. Although he worked hard like he owned the place, he realized how all that could be taken from him at any time, and he didn't really like that. He liked what working and owning a private practice had to offer like freedom, being your own boss, controlling the type of service you offer, and flexibility on when you work.

In 2008, he started his own practice in Brooklyn, New York, called "Park Slope Eye". He claims his success to being very active in social media and having a strong online presence. He also does a lot of unorthodox things when it comes to running his office, for example there are no phones in his office. So how do people schedule appointments? Online, through their Facebook page. They also do not have a website. He does have a blog through WordPress, and is very active on Facebook and Yelp. What if someone needs to come in for an emergency? Apparently, he does have a phone line that voice prompts to his website for scheduling or leaving a message, which is translated as an e-mail by Google Voice to their e-mail, where they can tend to emergencies. However, he said he is not the type of doctor

that will come in after work hours for an emergency but he does have a system for tending to emergency cases while he is in the office.

When he graduated from optometry school, he was not very prepared. However, he quickly went from not having a CV to having a 24 page CV in six to seven years. Today, he wears many hats. He is a spokesperson, adviser, speaker, mentor, consultant, writer, doctor, owner, regional director, and a “subleasee”. In January 2015, he subleased a Target Optical and currently works there more than his own office. He made the joke that he might turn in his 30 day notice very soon but he also pointed out, he doesn’t forget that they too can give him his 30 day notice at any time. He is unsure as to why he really is doing the Target Optical. He calls it research. He recommends to not do subleasing because you have to see three to four patients in an hour and they need to buy glasses or contacts in order for you to profit and if they don’t will not resign your lease.

His Advice:

- Traditional pillars of optometry: Services you offer, contacts, and glasses
- Don’t wear ties: dirtiest thing you can bring. No one washes their ties as often as they should. Instead, wear sunglasses.
- Wears fake Ray Bans and he just gives it to patients he dilates who do not have sunglasses with them. This makes a difference in the patient’s experience.
- Park Slope Eye serves coffee, tea, locally brewed beer, and cocktails before eye exams. Great publicity and this is something you would never be able to do other than your own office.
- “A students make great professors and C students make millions!” Why is that? C students are more social.
- When you have things you like that are time wasters tempting you, like Starcraft, ask yourself if it will help you achieve your goals? Will it make you better? If not, then put boundaries on those activities.
- Stay up to date on news because it comes in handy when it comes to making small talk with your patients. He uses Need2Know.
- Applications to have on your phone that he uses: meditation apps, luminosity, 7 MMC
- Audiobooks he recommend:
 - o **How to Win Friends and Influence People** by Dale Carnegie
 - o **The Little Gold Book of YES! Attitude: How to Find, Build and Keep a YES! Attitude for a Lifetime of Success** by Jeffrey Gitomer
 - o **Think and Grow Rich** by Napoleon Hill
 - o **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People** by Stephen R. Convey
 - o **The E Myth Revisited** by Michael E. Gerber: The book that inspired him to open his own practice when he was on vacation
- People want to do business with people they like and these audiobooks helped him be that likable person.
- Can I borrow a dollar? You have to make your budget last. Don’t get into trouble with debt. Use credit cards wisely.

- Live like a student now so you don't have to later. Getting tied in to a luxurious life style is having golden shackles. Don't blow your paycheck away.
- Cars, houses, all golden shackles. However, it is more than just money. Family too, so timing is important.
- "Do what you're told!" Shake this mentally off. "You have to do it my way. If you don't, it's obviously wrong." True entrepreneurs have the creative spirit. Do it his/her way to pass the exam but then do it the way you want to/believe is the right way.
- What does Dr. Bazan do differently? No website, no phone, community event space, art gallery, hospitality, cloud based computing.
 - o Looked at phone use for 3 months to see why do people call? To schedule an appointment. So now they have an online scheduler. Now he doesn't have to pay 30-40,000 on someone to answer the phone. Automatic conformation sent automatically-no human error. Improve service and decreased overhead.
 - o Community Event Space: offers space of CPA, yoga, and other events. He doesn't charge for it. What does it get? Publicity.
 - o Art Gallery – local artists display their work. Don't charge to sell their work. Artists love that and would love to have their work displayed. Have coffee, tea, local beer at events. Give the coffee at the office in mugs and then tell them they can keep it.
- Creative office ideas: dog friendly, kid friendly, office without a front desk, tablet at check in, froyo bar etc. Start thinking now.
- Google success for a website: Updated frequently and has lots of key words
- All-nighters: when he is in a creative moment, he just goes with it. He likes doing it. It's his business. If he was working for a Lens Crafters he would absolutely not stay up.
- He is not a fan of lab coat because of the image it gives off. He wears a suit instead.
- 3 hour exam vs 30 min exam: When you do an exam think about what you would do in a private practice because in reality you wouldn't do all the things they make you do in clinic.
- Hand-shake/Networking: extremely important. The more people that you meet and make impressions on, the more opportunities you have.
- Conferences: a little about the CE but a lot about networking.
- Go get a mentor. Go shadow them. Should meet more than 3 times a year like we have in school.
- Tons of magazines: optometric management, optometric times and they want to hear from you when you're new out of school. 500-800 words. Creative spark—don't let it go to waste, use it.
- Specialize by doing a residency. Differentiate, do not compete.
- Write down your goals. Do it.
- Kick your own butt- motivation is on you.
- Learn to calculate and pay attention to cost of goods
- Take any sales training that they make available and get on the floor and learn to sell
- Begin to optimize your contact lens sales

- Get on the conference calls—CEO’s know a lot and when you listen you learn a lot. Pay attention. Don’t put it on mute and walk away.
- Projections- keep track of numbers and they then tend to go up
- Traits of a successful entrepreneur – efficient, good work ethic, integrity, interpersonal skills, become likable, creative, inquisitive, driven, goal-oriented, independent, confident, calculated risk taker, committed, have a vision and a good plan
- Easy to start a business- make a business plan

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Useful Resources

<http://www.networkalliance.com/>

<http://theneed2know.com/>

<http://www.visionsource.com/>

<https://www.score.org/>

<https://www.visionone.org/home/home>