



Jay Abraham Interviews Harvey Mackay

Jay interviews Harvey McKay, best-selling author of “Swim with Sharks without Being Eaten Alive”. Amongst a wide range of topics Harvey touches on some solid, practical psychology, and reveals his A to Z of selling.

Jay Abraham: Today, we are going to be spending time with a man who is my hero, and he's my hero for a number of extraordinarily logical reasons. We know him first and foremost from his book, Swim with Sharks Without being Eaten Alive, but he's got one, two, three, four, five other mega bestsellers: Beware the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt; Dig Your Well Before You're Thirsty; Pushing the Envelope All the Way to the Top We Got Fired and it's the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us and Use your Head to Get Your Foot in the Door.

Okay, we're going to be talking to Harvey McKay, mega bestselling author and most insightful human being about the psychology of interrelating with other people to help them get what they want so that you ultimately get what you want. He's just written a thoroughly unique and unprecedented book, called The McKay MBA of Selling in the Real World. It's a compilation of no nonsense, non-theoretical exceptionally sinewy four-page chapters that get right to the heart of an issue that is critical. Harvey, it is as pleasure having you.

Harvey Mackay: I've been looking forward to this ever since we put it on the calendar. I have to just be as frank and candid as I can be, I'm in the middle of a 30 city book tour; I probably will do 200 interviews of radio, television, newspaper, online, Podcasts, the whole nine yards. No one, and I really mean this, sincerely, no one will set the table as nice as you have just set the table with your preface and your introduction, so I really appreciate it. Thank you very much.

JAY: You're welcome. So let's go at it. When I was reviewing the book, I was laughing because you say in the beginning, “Don't read this book!” You say, “Destroy it, disseminate it, rip it out, stick it on the wall, stick it in your car, take pages, and put it in your bathroom on the mirror.”

HARVEY: Let me just start off by saying I want to salute and applaud the unsung hero out there in the marketplace today. Who is that? That is the salesperson. There are no jobs, there are no businesses, and there are no factories unless someone brings the business through the front door. I'm proud of the nice 100 million dollar company I founded at age 26 and I want to tell you our emphasis has always been on sales. And so it's critical, it's key, again. Unless someone brings it through the front door, we don't have the 550 jobs in Minneapolis, in Minnesota and in our other plants around the country. That's number one. Number two, it's not dog eat dog out there, Jay, it's shark eat shark, I mean it's brutal out there since the economic tsunami hit us two years ago, so unfortunately it's “take the business away from somebody else.” Anybody can get an order in good times that will take no talent whatsoever, but try to take the business away from someone else and keep him or her, keep them as a





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customer. That takes a lot of talent, so you're right. First of all, you don't go to school once for a lifetime, you're in school all of your life and our lives basically change. Remember Charlie Tremendous Jones, I don't know if you knew him or not.

JAY: Sure, and I'm old enough, I remember.

HARVEY: Well he was a very good friend of mine and he said and it's just a phenomenal quote, "Our lives basically change in two ways. The people we meet and the books we read." So, for your listeners out there, for your readers, for your viewers, I say one thing. Tail link is better than the most retentive memory, which means write it down. And the same thing when you're reading that book, don't just read it, study it, underline it, highlight it, use post-it-notes, then you will have your MBA in the real world. "Think and Grow Rich". I know you're familiar with that book by Napoleon Hill.

JAY: Of course.

HARVEY: And "How to Win Friends and Influence People", and incidentally, one book that your viewers and readers would not have heard of probably, is "How to Stop Worrying and Start Living" by Dale Carnegie. I've read those books, no exaggeration, over 50 times. A person's life equals the total sum of his or her experiences. And so the people that read "Swim with the Sharks" five and ten years ago, they've had so many experiences that my 70,000 words in that book will mean different things now than he'll mean one, three, five, seven years from now. That's why you have to keep reading and rereading those classics over and over again.

JAY: Your life has been dedicated to teaching people how to connect. What are you trying to do with your new book?

HARVEY: It's a compilation of my entire life of selling. At age 26 I founded my company.

Harvey McKay: I'm not the President or CEO. I'm an envelope salesman. And I'm proud of it. You know, salesman is a negative word with some of these uppity, uppity companies, the Fortune 500 companies. A salesperson becomes a consultant, an adviser, a counselor, but not a salesperson. And so I'm proud of it. Again, nothing happens until someone brings the business through the front door. This is a very, very tough economy. I mean we're talking 9.1 percent unemployment right now which is really 18% when you add up all the people who can't find jobs, all the people who have given up. 7 million people have been looking for more than 8 months – that's beyond comprehension. There are a lot of people hurting out there and we can't go backwards, we have to go forwards.

How is this country going to get out of this seismic shift that's taken place, how are we going to get out? We have to grow our way out of it. How is a company going to survive? That company has to grow its way out of it. How is every reader at this very second going to get out of it?

They have to grow their way out.





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The old adage, “practice makes perfect,” is not completely true. You have to add one word: perfect practice makes perfect. For those of you are golfers, you can go out and play eight days a week, you can practice eight days a week, and if you got a loop in your swing, what are you doing? You’re perfect in an error, you put a ceiling on how good you’ve become.

I’ve studied the Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic languages and I’ll go to an audience, I say, “Raise your hand; how many people can become fluent in Chinese?” Two percent raised their hands. Guess what? For the 98% that didn’t raise their hands in that 2,500 person audience it’s a piece of cake, there’s over a billion people that speak Chinese. Everyone can learn Chinese, there’s no such word as can’t, if you practice the right concepts.

So, I go out and I hire coaches. I don’t spend a penny. I make an investment in myself. I have a golf coach, I have a tennis coach, I have a speech coach, I have a humor coach, I have a marathon coach, and I’ve run 10 marathons, Boston, New York, Twin Cities. Again, I have a language coach where I studied all those languages. On and on and on, I have a social media coach, and let me tell you the bottom line now Jay. Here it is, whatever, why I do this?

Whatever my God given talent is, whatever my God given potential is, that’s it, I can’t do any better.

I have a goal; a goal is a dream with a deadline, time and action calendar. I focus, I concentrate, I hire the coaches to help me and they take my talent, get everything out of it, you know my 10 marathons, my running coach is right there, right next side to me by my side and I do the best I can and I don’t have to worry about anything, because I can’t do any better. In fact I can’t wait to get up in the morning. Why? Because well, here’s what’s on my tombstone, are you ready?

JAY: Yes.

HARVEY: He couldn’t sleep fast enough.

JAY: I love that.

HARVEY: I don’t want to go to sleep. I really am afraid I’ll miss something and so that practice makes perfect, get the right coaching, get the right advice. Over the last 40 plus years I’ve coached 500 people, maybe 600 to 700, one at a time. Every one of them saw their net worth’s double and that’s not just blah, blah, blah. I know because I get constant immediate unfiltered feedback from our customers. I get it from our suppliers and the people that I happen to coach and mentor and so any person that picks up this book practices it over a long period of time, whatever your net-worth is going to be, all right, 3, 5, 7, 10, 15 years from now, it should double. And you know what? It’s not about money. It’s about happiness.

JAY: That’s cool. I’m going to read a couple of the chapter titles from your newest book. First one; Chapter 10; LinkedIn; Facebook; The New Handshake. You’ve got a big chapter on Social Media, The New Sales Mega Center.





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HARVEY: Well let me give you my take, my overall view. First of all, there's that seismic shift that's taking places in sales in our entire society for the whole 7.2 billion people in the planet.

The great classical sales principles hold true. But they need to be fused with cutting edge, Internet technology, so therefore this book is road tested, and there's no baloney ins and out or sales traction in today's super competitive what I call sales landscape. So I've two goals: real world and real sales. This is not a book to dream on, it's a book, to bank on.

Technology is not an option, Jay. Salespeople who pride themselves on being computer ignorant are half right—they are ignorant, period. It took radio 38 years to reach 50 million listeners. It took television 13 years to reach 50 million households. The Internet took only 4 years to reach 50 million users, by 2010. This study was done 2 years ago, so imagine the stats today with nearly 2 billion internet users worldwide, that's not a typo, so stay in tune with the new selling etiquette.

For example, don't ask questions answered on a company's websites just to make small talk; it shows how lazy and disrespectful you are when you're out there selling trying to get an order. Keep your emails brief and friendly and to the point and when you Twitter you've got to have some take-home value repeat, take home value, substantive, in-depth in those 140 characters.

It's got to have some humor in it, it's got to really have some meaning, has to tell you something, has to inform, and it has to be succinct. Your presence on LinkedIn and Facebook are the new business cards of the 21st century. And before you post anything—my dad taught me this—ask yourself, “How would I feel if this appeared on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper where I live?”

When salespeople join social media discussion groups the good ones quickly learn, it pays to be altruistic. You want to add honest, helpful information to the conversation. Don't promote or sell products directly. You have to build credibility. Alright? And that's the most powerful long term sales advantage.

JAY: My belief and I think it will be confirmed by you two things. First of all, you got to add value but you got to know what value means to the recipient and that requires you to care enough, understand enough, research enough and connect enough. That's the first thing.

Second, I believe you're having a continuous conversation. I'd like you to really speak to the fact that it's not static.

HARVEY: I've never met a successful hermit. You got to be out there. Your antenna has got to be up; you don't have a lot of wealth for this. You have to be electric, have to be fresh; you have to know your customers. Let's talk about that for a minute, about add value to the recipient. Let me just give you a specific example, one on one if I can Jay. If I'm going to call on you to sell my product, or you're an HR person at a big company, small company, medium size and I want to get a job and I'm one of those 7 million, have been looking more than 8 months, I want to get a job, or if want to improve upon my circumstance, I have to humanize my selling strategy.





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JAY: What does that mean?

HARVEY: Every study known to mankind will tell you can't talk about business all the time; its 30% business and 70% social, so I have a 66 question customer profile, that I want to know about. We have 3000 accounts all over the world with our 100 million dollar company selling in 20 different countries, so there are no cold calls at McKay Envelope company, I'll use the invisible web, okay, there are search engines that we talk about in the book that are beyond comprehension.

I have to know what you're interested in, I can find out through the invisible web before I even make a cold call and there is no such thing as a cold call. I can find out whether you're a democrat, republican, independent, I can find out whether you're a golfer, what your golf scores are, what your handicap is, what courses you play, where you live, I can find out all the charities you've given money to and this is honest and ethical ...

JAY: Well it gives you a context of appreciating, understanding and connecting. The key to all of this is authentic intention. It's not to game the transaction, it's to bond, it's to appreciate, to understand, to appreciate, and to acknowledge and respect all the implications that affect the other side, don't you think?

I've got to be honest, one of the reason I got involved with the magazine is I was intimidated, I was overwhelmed, I was actually beleaguered by, oh God, I don't understand this, I don't get it. But the truth of the matter is, if you embrace, not only is it exciting but it gives you so much more power, strength and a different world of connectivity. Don't you think?

HARVEY: Without question. There was an entire chapter in the MacKay MBA in maximizing Twitter, you know as a sales intelligence tool about prospects. I don't think much has changed in the last 75 or 100 years. Three things make a successful salesperson. Number one, hungry fighter, number two, hungry fighter, number three, hungry fighter.

Now you have to have the trust factor; trust, the five most important letters in the alphabet, you have to establish trust, and then that hungry fighter. And failure is not being down, failure is staying down, so now you add the trust and the hungry fighter and the passion and the resourcefulness and the loyalty, and the guts and the courage and all these synonyms that make a successful salesperson, again that is what you have to have. But then you have to fuse it for the following reason.

I'm from Minneapolis. 25, 35 years ago companies such as Honeywell, Cray Research and Control Data had the most successful, largest, biggest computers in the whole world. You couldn't get them in your office, Jay. Guess what? Three feet from where I'm speaking to you right is my iPhone. I've got more power in my iPhone, in the palm of my hand than those computers had 30 years ago, so now continue on, so I've got this power, and the change is simply this. It's how we get our information, that's the biggy.





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How we get our information today is beyond comprehension. So you can also use derivative tools to access conversations about products and companies, including competitors. The great power of such web sales information of course is real time. It's constantly refreshing itself.

JAY: That's very insightful.

HARVEY: I mentor 25 business people professionally and I got about 6 or 7 techies in there, so I just love it. So, back to traditional marketing; it's a one way communication. Twitter is a two-way communication and, of course, a model for the future. So salespeople have to learn again how to engage themselves in the conversation and they need to do it in a way that's not self-serving.

You can Google your way to an infinite amount of research about people and companies. We know that, real sales experts are tapping that second university, deep web or as I call it, the invisible web. And oh and by the way, you know, Google itself is a terrific case study. I know you've studied it. In his book, Google co-founder, Larry Page says he got this crazy idea that he was going to download the entire web onto his computer and that's what they did, and Google revolutionized advertising and marketing.

JAY: What's the lesson?

HARVEY: What my father taught me when I was eighteen years old, namely that there's no such word as can't, unless it's a physical impossibility. I can't run the 100 yard dash in 6 seconds. I can't flap my arms and fly and so therefore the lesson is that it's the visualization, it's the passion, it's the dream and it's practicing the right concepts. You have to do all of these things over a long period of time; you know how important persistence is. Once you've maximized your potential and your God given talents under the right tutelage, then that's it.

You can't sell everybody, you're going to get some disappoints, and we haven't even talked about rejection.

JAY: I want to go through the categories in your book because I want you to speak to them.

HARVEY: Surely, and just a brief aside, there's 70,000 words in that book and on the last page; there's a money back guarantee. I personally, Harvey McKay, guarantee your money back if you do not like and learn from this book and here's the aside. When I wrote Swim with the Sharks and six books in between, back in 1988, I wanted to be the first, like you, out of the box thinking, I wanted to be the first author to ever put in a book, money back guarantee if you don't like this book. And guess what? I had a six week World War III fight with my publisher, but I prevailed and they put it in Swim with the Sharks, 5 million copies sold, 18 people asked for their money back, 7 of them were my best friends.

About the book, it all starts with the ten most powerful, two letter words in the English language, "If it is to be, it is up to me." That's it, it's nobody else, You're out there, you got to learn, look in the mirror, you've got to take your game to the next level and you can do it, so that's why again, believe in yourself. That confidence comes right in there and believing in yourself.





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Jack Kemp was a good friend of mine; he went to Occidental College, of course he was a congressman for 20 years, ran for Vice President of the United States with Bob Dole. Jack told me a story about when he was in college and he went out for football and, of course, he's not doing very well. His junior year is a total failure. Then, in his senior year, six weeks before the season starts, the coach calls him in and says, "You're my man, you're my go-to guy, you're the leader I believe in one person every single year and you are that person. Don't tell anybody else, I'm counting on you." And Kemp tells me, he flew out of that office, had a great year, a senior year, Occidental went on the pros, and the rest is history.

JAY: Okay.

HARVEY: Then Kemp tells me, "Harvey four weeks after the season I found out he called in another 10 players and told them the same thing." So, look at what confidence can do. And, then here I'm going to be contrary now. Nobody has heard this study from the University of Michigan, I love that school; my daughter went there. This is a study that is incredible. They got 5 friends to play a trick on a 6th friend named John.

The friends all shared a ride to school in one car; five got in and they picked up John and all of a sudden they looked at their friend and said, "You feel okay?" John says he feels fine. "Well," they say, "you look like you have bags under your eyes." Fine. They go their own ways; second hour, someone comes and says, "Did you lose weight, John?" At the third hour, a third person comes up, and makes another negative comment. "You sure you're not worried about something? You're not acting yourself, John." By the fifth hour John checks into a hospital.

JAY: Really?

HARVEY: Isn't that wild?

JAY: Interesting.

HARVEY: A happy person.. well adjusted.. and in five hours they're driving him to the hospital. How's that for the power of negative thoughts?

JAY: Good.

HARVEY: Visualization or fantasizing is the most powerful means there is of achieving personal goals. There's a man by the name of Victor Frankel who owes his life to his ability to project himself. He was a renowned Viennese psychiatrist before the Nazis drew him into a concentration camp. I heard him speak years ago and he held us completely spellbound. "Look," he said, "There's only one reason why I'm here today, what kept me alive in a situation where others had given up hope and died was the dream, something I could hear, of telling you how I survived the Nazi concentration camp. Never been here before, never seen any of you before, never given this speech before, but in my dreams, in my dreams I stood before you in this room and said these words 1,000 times."





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JAY: Interesting.

HARVEY: And you see I learned that from him, but I also learned it when I was playing golf at the University of Minnesota from my coach. He said, "Harvey, I want you to visualize what that drive is going to be, what the trajectory is, the feeling in your hands with a good click and you do that. You say to yourself and visualize it. 'This is going to be the last sand shot I ever hit,' and you visualize it."

JAY: Yeah, go ahead.

HARVEY: But the setbacks, rejection. You know rejection doesn't have to be permanent. Failure doesn't have to be permanent. I wrote a book, *We Got Fired* and it's the Best Thing That Ever Happened to Us. Well I went out and I interviewed Lou Holtz; Holtz is my closest friend, we're joined at the hip, many people know that name. So I interviewed these people and here's the common denominator which is so very, very important. They all learned one thing that they had to learn from their failure, from being rejected: you can't wallow in rejection and in failure.

You have to take something from it, learn from it. If I'm not successful, if I make three, four, six calls and there's no way I'm going to get the business and I lost the big contract and I don't have another one coming up for two years, you know what I do? I go back and call on you, and I ask you, what did I do wrong.

JAY: Agreed.

HARVEY: Can you help me? Was I too overbearing, did I talk too much, was I not a good listener. Was I not resourceful, did I know enough about my product and I get that feedback from you, how's that from learning from rejection.

JAY: I've been very blessed, my mentors taught me that every time you do not achieve your objective to have the person you're trying to persuade help you be better; ask him or her to tell you what to do differently.

HARVEY: And obviously if we could go out, Jay, and get a 100 of the most successful people in the country, male and female, and interview them one at a time and say prioritize why you were a success? Okay. I think that the overwhelming majority would say their network.

JAY: I agree.

HARVEY: They built their network and it just leads to happiness and anyone can do it. That's all; have a deep down burning desire to find out about every single person that you ever meet, that's all.

JAY: I think it's tragic when people want to try to do it alone and be an island and do it the hard way.

HARVEY: We mentioned the seven sections of the book, but, guess what? These are afterthoughts and I call that, Harvey McKay's ABC's of Selling.





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JAY: I love it.

HARVEY: A is for availability; B is believe in yourself; C is customers are always right; D is deliver more than you promised; E is education is for life—and just as an aside, if you think education is expensive try ignorance; F is for follow up and follow through. H is for humanize or selling strategy; I is the least important letter in selling; J is join trade organizations; K is know your competitors; L is listen to your customers; M is maybe, the worst answer a customer can give; N is networking of course; O is opportunities are everybody keep your antenna up; P okay that's for price; Q is for quality; R is for relationships; S is for service; T is for trust, which is central for doing business with anyone; U is for unlimited potential; V is for volunteer; W is for winning doesn't necessarily meaning everyone else loses; X is for X-ray and CAT scan, your customer; Y is for You, the word your customer needs to hear often; Z is for zeal, a critical element in your presentations, your service and life in general.

JAY: What question should I have asked you that I didn't and had I asked you, what would your answer be?

HARVEY: Well, I think, well you're a beautiful interviewer. I think possibly and we really didn't touch on what drives Harvey McKay, what motivates me to having a wonderful career.

Economically I don't need another penny in my whole life, so what drives me to get up every single day? And I guess it would start with my father who taught me about reciprocity without keeping score. I meet you Jay and the moment my hand goes out and I introduce myself I say to myself, what can I do for Jay? Now people have heard that before and there might be 2 to 5% of the population that lives that life that way. Expect nothing in return. Repeat, expect nothing in return. 25% of my life is voluntarism. My father said he won every humanitarian award there was to win. I lost my mother to breast cancer—she was 49—when I graduated the University of Minnesota, so I lived with my father for 5 years. I never go a day without blessing my father, I challenge every person out there in the audience to just try it for three months or six months, expect nothing in return.

JAY: What's the one takeaway you want everybody reading, listening to this, to grasp amongst everything else?

HARVEY: Well and before I answer that question, let me just say, if they go to HarveyMacKay.com they can pick up everything on my website. I would like them to take a look at that, so they can grasp these concepts over and over.

JAY: And they're invaluable, so I encourage it.

HARVEY: What's the one takeaway concept? I would say reciprocity without keeping score. Live a life like that; you won't believe how happy you will be again, no matter what your age is.

JAY: Yeah, this has been extraordinary and I'm grateful for you on behalf of all the readers. Thank you.





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HARVEY: Well, thanks again, and thanks for the phenomenal interview. I really, sincerely appreciate it. Best of luck. Bye-bye.

JAY: Thank you.

