

Opportunity  
**ROCKS!**<sup>TM</sup>

Be a Rock Star in  
Business and Beyond

**Marvelous Mark Kamp**

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This book is dedicated to my first real band, my family. My father and mother who were the President and CEO's, or the drummers. They set the beat that I still follow to this day. They taught me that practice makes perfect.

I also want to acknowledge the other members of my original band. My sister was like the bass player. She provided the structure and backbone for our family song, but like most bass-players, never got a lot of credit for it. And my brother was like the rhythm guitarist—making the music complete while standing back and enabling me to take the front man position.

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## Foreword

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Rock 'n' Roll is a business. A lot of peace-and-love type songwriters will tell you that's not true, but don't let them fool you. You don't eat, you can't play. Talent is important, but it won't get you where you want to go all by itself. If you want to be a professional, then get serious about music as a profession. The musicians that make it long enough to become rock stars, the ones who stick around through the years, are the ones who know that. Rock stars aren't just killer musicians, they're entrepreneurs too.

But listen, that doesn't mean that music isn't a lot of fun. It's awesome. You get to see the world. You get paid to do what you love. People buy you beer. Oh, and the screaming girls. Yeah, that's pretty cool, too. You can be serious about living your dream, about success, and still have a blast. You can do it without selling your soul. You just can't do it without selling your music. You have to have a vision, an attitude, and a high tolerance for failure. But if you can be bulletproof and persistent, you might get to be a star.

That's what *Opportunity Rocks* is about. This book is for everyone who has wanted to be a rock star at what they do. You don't have to be a guitar god for the message to apply

to you. It's about helping you achieve your potential—and get the gold records—no matter what kind of life you lead.

Everybody needs to learn what rock stars know. Marvelous Mark has broken it down for you, the things you need to start doing in order to rock your own life. What's keeping you from pursuing your career like you were chasing a hit single? Why shouldn't you think of your family as a band? That sounds way cooler than trying to live like business is a battlefield, or like you're some modern day Machiavelli, or like someone moved your...well, you get the idea. Mark's point is that you can be ambitious, set goals, go after the things you want, without turning into a stuffed shirt.

This book is full of practical ideas, and examples of legendary musicians who made them work. Mark's here to tell you that you can pursue your own vision, make decisions and handle change, and stay in it for the long haul. And if you can do those things, you can be a rock star, too...of the boardroom, the softball field, or the courtroom. That's up to you.

# Opportunity Rocks!

## Be a Rock Star in Business and Beyond

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I'll bet nobody has to tell you what a rock star is. Say the word and your thoughts go immediately to your favorite band or solo artist—to bright lights, blistering guitar chords, screaming girls, and wildly tossing hair. Maybe you picture Mick Jagger strutting across a stage, or Steven Tyler howling into the mic. Maybe you think of Lady GaGa's glittering costumes, Natalie Merchant's smooth vocals. No matter the musician you envision, the point is, you know who they are and what they represent—talent, success, respect, and the really good tables at trendy restaurants.

Think about it—the word “rock star” has become a metaphor for the same reason. A rock star can be anyone in any industry who has earned fame, admiration, and success by being the best at what they do. That's what this book is about: helping **you** become the best at what you do and achieving rock star status in your career and your life.

Rock 'n' roll legends have a lot to teach us, and not just about how to trash a hotel room. Music is a business. Most truly successful musicians understand that you have to

treat it like a business and find a way to keep your passion for the music at the same time. The artists who excel at this become rock stars.

The rock legends, the icons, the geniuses of music all have a story. They started out with little or nothing; they had challenges along the way. Each one had a never surrender, never give up attitude. These are the people who hung in there, no matter what, and eventually became the legends they are today.

You have more in common with them than you think. At some point, maybe when you were in school, you decided on the career path you wanted to take, and now you're on that journey. You face challenges and setbacks. But you have made it this far, and you can use your talents and determination to get further if you make smart choices and you don't give up. We can take the ideas and techniques of those legendary musicians and apply them to just about any field to help you become a rock star, too.

How do I know? My name is Mark Kamp—you can call me “Marvelless Mark.” I acquired my radio and stage name in the '80s. I have branded myself this way because of my “less gives you more” attitude. (Also, it's easier to copyright and trademark a name when you misspell it.)

My own life has been a kind of rock odyssey. It has led me to a place where I can help people with the things I love

most—music and motivation. I started out as a farm kid in Missouri, a place where kids learn to do everything from driving a tractor to castrating pigs, from mechanics to construction work. Our family knew firsthand that if you didn't have a solid work ethic, you had no crop and you didn't eat.

In high school, I started a DJ business with some friends in our small town. I loved the limelight and pushing the envelope (something my less visionary friends called “showing off”), and when I graduated, I found part time work at a local radio station. I worked two other full time jobs while learning the ropes of the entertainment business. I had a great radio mentor who taught me all about how to connect with people, and about how sales, marketing, programming, and managing people depend on understanding them. I kept the local DJ gig as a sideline, started to really study what some of my favorite rock legends did to create a public persona, and attended a lot of concerts. I applied what I learned to my show—adding costumes, special effects, props, interaction, video—I was constantly looking for ways to stand out, to be different and better than any of our competitors in the county or even the state. I was branding myself and didn't even know it.

I made the move to the big city and got a job doing promotions, DJing, and nightclub management. Around 1990, I relocated to Florida to pursue a career as a cruise ship entertainer and program director; but I never

made it to sea. An entertainment producer discovered me performing at an event and connected me with an entertainment management company that helped me reinvent myself, hone and fine tune my talents, and sent me on the road as Marvelless Mark: The Ultimate Interactive Entertainment Experience for Corporate America. Soon, I was opening or closing for big name rock bands, comedians, and some of the greatest inspirational and motivational speakers. It was awesome. When I wasn't on stage, I was watching them and listening to everything they had to say about success, motivation, happiness, and turning your dreams to reality. It was a free education. With some creative guidance, I kept the show growing and eventually started my own show band.

That's what I was doing when the American economy hit the skids. In the aftermath of the initial crash, I realized how much people needed all of the information I had learned, and how much they still crave entertainment as part of learning, meetings, and events. So I was led to reinvent myself once again with a more edu-tainment (entertainment with a message) format. The whole country has faced many new challenges in the last decade, and I believe people need music, motivation, and inspiration. You can get education and have a good time at the same time.



*My model for business is the Beatles. They were four guys who kept each others negative tendencies in check. They balanced each other and the total was greater than the sum parts. And that's how I see business. Great things in business are never done by one person, they are done by a team of people.*

*~ Steve Jobs, Apple Computers'*

Thanks to what I have learned from all of my own personal rock stars—my parents, mentors, great fans, life style gurus, and business coaches like Steven Covey and Anthony Robbins, bands like KISS, and lessons from my own mistakes along the way, I have had a pretty rockin' life so far. I think anyone can. It all started on a farm...I was forced to be creative in order to entertain myself and others, to dream and to envision that someday I would travel the world as a rock star. I just didn't know at the time it would be as a business rock star. Now, I'm here to help you pursue your dreams and visions in the most fun, entertaining way possible.

Before we crank up the music and get to taking care of business (or as Elvis would say, TCB), let's make sure we're all in the same key. We'll start with the characteristics of a real rock star:

- superior talent
- confidence
- hard working

- determination
- high standards
- connection to audience
- able to inspire passionate loyalty

A rock star has natural gifts, sure; but, they also have other qualities that help them make the most of those gifts. To make the most of your talent, focus your energy, and go the distance, first you have to master some basic chords.

### **Mastering the Basic Chords**

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Most rock ‘n’ roll is built around a few guitar chords—the sounds that the instrument makes when multiple strings are struck at the same time. Put together a few simple chords and you can build a limitless variety of great songs. With that in mind, this book is built around these basic chords with a foundational concept connected to each one. Every rock band starts out by playing songs with three fundamental chords: F, B, and A. Consequently, most rock songs are built around these three simple chords. So that’s where we’ll start, too.

### **Section 1 – The Basic Chords**

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Chapters 1 - 3 describe the A chord; that’s about Attitude.  
Chapters 4 - 6 describe the B chord, and that’s your Band.  
Chapters 7 - 9 describe the F chord, and that’s your Fans.

Just like our musician friends, once we get those down, we will master the rest of the chords, the ones that add color and depth to the music. These are C, D, G, and E.

## **Section 2 – Advanced Chords**

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Chapter 10 is the G chord, where we consider your Goals.  
Chapter 11 is the D chord, where we talk about your Decisions.

Chapter 12 is the C chord, where we discuss Change.

Chapter 13 is the E chord, where we talk about Energy.

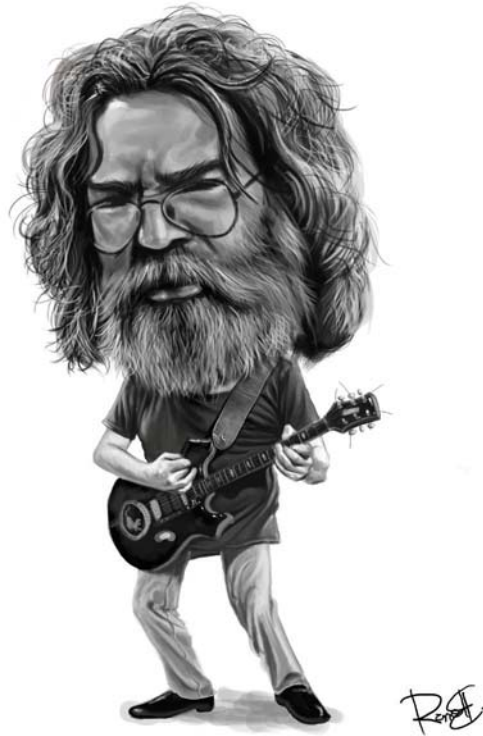
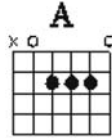
So enough of the pre-show. Let's get to the music. Just one last question... are you ready to ROCK?



## **Section 1 – The Basic Chords**



# A Chord ATTITUDE



*You do not merely want to be considered just the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do.*

*~ Jerry Garcia<sup>2</sup>*

## Be More than a One Hit Wonder

---

I bet you are familiar with the term “One Hit Wonder.” It refers to a band or artist who has one hugely popular song, and then fades into obscurity. You might hear that song on the classic rock station for years, but somehow they never manage to hit the charts again. The first success is nice, for sure (and it’s better than never having your 15 minutes of fame at all), but it certainly isn’t what anyone dreams about doing with their lives or their gifts. Everyone wants to hit the charts again and again.

You don’t want to be a One Hit Wonder in your life or career, either. Who wants to fizzle out after one early success and then spend the years wondering why they couldn’t repeat it? So let’s think for a moment about the difference between a One Hit Wonder and a genuine Rock Star.

1. Both have talent.
2. Both put effort and determination into reaching a certain goal.
3. Both attract attention for producing something—in this case, a song—that people appreciate.

The One Hit Wonder and the Rock Star got to that first level of success by doing the same thing: creating a song that everyone can identify with, and performing it well. The



difference is that rock stars do this continually over time. That's how they develop the fan base that sustains them.

A One Hit Wonder can't sustain that effort. He doesn't keep that connection to audiences. He doesn't change or grow enough to stay fresh. A true rock star has momentum. She keeps high standards for her work and she pushes herself to keep growing. The key to building that momentum is our A chord. It's all about ATTITUDE.

*Rock 'n' roll is an attitude; it's not a musical form of a strict sort. It's a way of doing things, of approaching things. Writing can be rock 'n' roll, or a movie can be rock 'n' roll. It's a way of living your life.*

*~ Lester Bangs<sup>3</sup>*

### **Attitude, Like Rock, Is a Way of Life**

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Lester Bangs was a musician and writer who worked for *Rolling Stone Magazine*. Are you familiar with all glittering rock gods of the 1960s and 70s? He saw them strut and howl in their prime. He saw first-hand the confidence and self-assurance that it takes to work a crowd. But read that quotation again. "Attitude" for Lester Bangs is "a way of living your life." And in his philosophy, rock 'n' roll is a certain type of attitude. It's a mindset, a way of living your life. If you have

the right attitude, it will manifest as a kind of confidence that you take with you on stage and into the world.

The way I see it, everything you need to know about a rock 'n' roll attitude comes down to three things: failure, opportunity, and yourself.

# Chapter 1

## Failure

*I did this the way you are supposed to. I played every club in New York City and I bombed in every club and then killed it in every club and I found myself as an artist. I learned how to survive as an artist, get real, and how to fail, and then figure out who I was as singer and performer. And, I worked hard.*

*~Lady Gaga<sup>4</sup>*

Musicians live in perpetual fear of bombing on stage. Over half of U.S. households have at least one member who can play a musical instrument, but only a small fraction ever perform in public.<sup>5</sup> It's a pretty scary thought... getting in front of a crowd, getting booed, getting bottles thrown at your head. No thanks! It's no surprise that so few people who can play an instrument will actually do so in front of strangers. According to research recently published in *Psychology Today*, the higher a person's fear of failure is, the more statistically likely they are to procrastinate and fail to take action.

Like everyone else, a rock star has to start out as an unknown. They have to take risks. They have to overcome the fear of failure in order to get out on that stage the first

time and they have to find the courage to keep going out even if the worst happens. Would you boo Prince off the stage? Audiences did when he was an opening act for the Rolling Stones.

According to a Harvard business study, “failure is actually the norm” for most ventures. 70-80% don’t see sufficient return on investments; 90-95% make projections that they subsequently don’t meet; and 30-40% of start-ups fail entirely.<sup>6</sup> The lesson here is that every venture and every person experiences failure at some point. What matters is what you choose to do about it.

*You build on failure. You use it as a stepping stone. Close the door on the past. You don’t try to forget the mistakes, but you don’t dwell on it. You don’t let it have any of your energy, or any of your time, or any of your space.*

*~Johnny Cash<sup>7</sup>*

OK, Johnny Cash isn’t really a “rock” star. But he is a legend. And he was the Man in Black. You should listen to him because your attitude about failure actually has a lot of influence over your potential success.

If you become so discouraged that you quit pursuing your goals, you will certainly never reach them. But if you are able to observe your failures, make improvements, and try again, lots of good things happen. You improve your skills.

You discover new strategies. And, eventually, you find your fan base.

### A Chord Drill

Write down one small thing that you wish you could do at work or in public, something that would be good for you, but scares you too much to try. It could be as simple as “I wish I could tell my boss that my name isn’t Shirley.” Get a friend to help you practice an interaction where you do that thing in a positive and appropriate way. Set a deadline (e.g. “one week from today”, “next time it happens”, “next month”). After a few drills, make a commitment to do this thing, and “perform” your A chord in public.

*We all fail somewhere along the line. The race you lost, the test you didn't pass and, in my case, the record execs who claimed “you'll never make it in the music business.” Whatever. The point is, you get up, brush yourself off and get on with life. ... it is what you learn from your failure that makes all the difference.*

*~Jon Bon Jovi, Bon Jovi®*

*Don't be afraid of failure - embrace that too. Dare to fail. If you never fail, you've never taken risks, and that's no way to take on this life.*

*~Richie Sambora, Bon Jovi®*

The band Bon Jovi was turned down by multiple record companies when they started playing in the early 1980s. But they kept promoting their songs aggressively and eventually

convinced a local radio station to include one of their songs on a compilation. That single's success opened the door to the regional market and touring opportunities that allowed them to build a reputation and refine their sound. Four years later, they released *Slippery When Wet*, the album that went gold and made them the darlings of MTV. They did not let early failures defeat them; they exercised persistence and kept working on their craft in the meantime. When that door opened, they were ready.

What all of these rock stars have in common was that they held on to their dreams and their core values, even when they encountered obstacles. They stayed focused and worked hard; they didn't try to cheat or fake their way to the top. If you read the tabloids, you've heard that rock stars aren't always the nicest people. Some of them are cranky, self-indulgent, rude, whiny, or just plain weird. In other words, they're still *human*. But the ones who last, who survive their own excesses, are the ones who maintain a certain integrity and commitment to the quality of their work. They work through the failure and disappointment instead of trying to get around it.

The same Harvard business study I mentioned earlier describes a difference between "enterprise failure" and "personal failure."<sup>10</sup> Let me break this down: the distinction is not between setbacks in your career versus your personal life. What they mean is that there is a difference between failure that comes from circumstances or misjudgment

and failure that comes from bad ethical choices. It is much harder to come back from a problem caused by lies, illegal activity, or morally questionable practices. I'm sure you'll be a real sweetheart even when you're rich and famous. Just remember that you can recover from just about any loss or setback easier than you can the loss of integrity.

*If you stick to your integrity and your goals, eventually somebody will appreciate what you are doing on a wider scale.*

*~ Bonnie Raitt<sup>11</sup>*

*Makes me that much stronger  
Makes me work a little bit harder  
It makes me that much wiser  
So thanks for making me a fighter  
Made me learn a little bit faster  
Made my skin a little bit thicker  
Makes me that much smarter  
So thanks for making me a fighter*

*~ Christina Aguilera, "Fighter"<sup>12</sup>*

Let your failures educate you and feed your ambitions. Nurture the persistence, flexibility, and resilience in your character; everyone has a bit of those buried inside them. If you still need a little food for thought about failure, here's a tip from a rock star of the ice rink, hockey legend Wayne Gretzky: "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take."