

Pop Culture samples and success stories

Stephen King - Don't give up

Author

Before getting a job as an English teacher after college, he worked as a laborer in the laundry industry and as a janitor. He wrote short stories and novels at night, occasionally boosting their income with a short story sale. With a wife and two small children, it was often a struggle, and many times a check for a story would arrive just in time to pay for the kids medical bills.

http://www.stephenking.com/the_author.html

His first story sold for \$35. The first published novel, *Carrie*, almost didn't survive his house - he originally threw it away partially into writing it, thinking that the characters and the story weren't worth developing. But his wife saved it from the trash and encouraged him to finish the book. When a publisher accepted the manuscript, it sold for \$400,000 and launched one of the most successful fiction writers in America.

<http://www.stephenkingshop.com/biography.htm>

Oprah Winfrey - Rise above your past

Television Icon

Oprah was born in a poor rural part of Mississippi in 1954. After a troubled adolescence in a small farming community, where she was sexually abused by a number of male relatives and friends of her mother, Vernita, she moved to Nashville to live with her father, Vernon, a barber and businessman. She won a beauty pageant at 18, which landed her a job in broadcast news. Winfrey launched the Oprah Winfrey Show in 1986 as a nationally syndicated program. With its placement on 120 channels and an audience of 10 million people, the show grossed \$125 million by the end of its first year, of which Winfrey received \$30 million. She soon gained ownership of the program from ABC, drawing it under the control of her new production company, Harpo Productions ('Oprah' spelled backwards) and making more and more money from syndication.

<http://www.biography.com/people/oprah-winfrey-9534419>

Shania Twain - Success is around the corner

Music Artist

One of the biggest country/ pop musicians, Shania Twain came from a small mining town in Ontario, Canada, where she was born in 1965. She began singing at age 10, and performed on Canadian TV while still a teenager. but her music career took a turn when her mother and step-father were killed in a car accident in 1987, leaving the 22-year-old to care for 3 younger siblings. After several years spent earning money by singing at a local resort, Twain went to Nashville in 1993, where she was soon signed to a record deal. Her second album, *The Woman in Me* in 1995, which sold 12 million copies, becoming the bestselling country album by a female artist in history.

<http://www.biography.com/people/shania-twain-9542122>

Alicia Keys - Feed your talent

Music Artist.

Keys was born on January 21, 1981, in New York City to an Italian-American mother and an African-American father. Her parents did not stay together and Keys was raised by her mother, Terri Augello, a paralegal and sometimes actress. Despite the difficult life of a single mom and the poverty in which she often struggled, Keys's mother was determined to nourish her child's

budding passion for music and enrolled Keys in piano classes. Keys told Rolling Stone, "I've had a deep love for music since I was four... Music came before everything, everything, everything. I would risk everything for it." Despite her commitment, Keys was aware of the financial strain the lessons put on her mother's meager salary and once begged to quit. "But my mom would tell me, 'Quit what you like, but you're not quitting piano.' She didn't care what it cost." Keys would later earn music scholarships, graduated high school at 16 from Manhattan's Professional Performance Arts School and became a multi-Grammy award winning artist.

Read more: <http://www.answers.com/topic/alicia-keys#ixzz1uJrOpYXY>

J.K. Rowling - from welfare to millionaire

Author, *Harry Potter* series

JK Rowling enjoyed a pretty typical middle-income English beginning, born in 1965. After taking a teaching job in Portugal, her marriage turned sour and she and her daughter were forced to move in with her sister in Edinburgh, Scotland. Struggling to make ends meet on welfare and a meager job, she began writing the first Harry Potter book in 1990. It took several years to finish. Once done, getting it accepted by an agent or publisher proved extremely difficult. Eventually, the book was picked up by a small publisher for a slim £1,500 (approx \$4,000) advance. She continued to work as a teacher until the sales took off in 1996. When Scholastic picked up the publishing rights in America, Rowling's advance topped over \$200,000. Today, she enjoys royalties not only from the books but the movies, toys, costumes and even a theme park area in Universal Studios Florida.

PERCEPTION EXAMPLES

Jay-Z and Warren Buffett

A rapper from the Projects. An investor from Omaha. What could these two possibly have in common? In fact, they are friends and have done charity work together, most notably in financial literacy for schoolchildren. Both believe in smart business decision and social responsibility.

Jay-Z didn't release his first album until he was 26 years old - after working on his musical career since he was 19. Things took off quickly after the first album. Once his music was established, he diversified his portfolio into a clothing line, leading Def Jam Records and purchased part of the Net NBA team. He is currently married to Beyonce. <http://www.biography.com/people/jay-z-507696>

Warren Buffett, the "Oracle from Omaha," is known as one of the most successful CEOs, businessman and investors known today, leading the large Berkshire Hathaway company. His credo, "you don't have to cheat to win," refers to his commitment to ethical business practices and giving back to the community. He has promised to donate 99% of his \$62 Billion estate to charity upon his death.

Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt

For our history buffs, FDR served as our 4-term president, from 1933 until his death in 1945. He led the US through the Depression, its recovery and almost to the end of WWII. During his time of office, he was known as the voice of strength and reason in a tumultuous time: "we have nothing to fear but fear itself" is one of his best-known quotes.

However, many people in the US did not realize that FDR was actually partially paralyzed until after his death... During his time, disabilities were seen as weaknesses that could impede his ability to lead. So his paralysis was hidden from the public. In a carefully crafted PR campaign, every picture of FDR showed him either sitting at his desk or standing, unobtrusively with the assistance of a cane and often the arm of another person. During speeches, he leaned heavily on the podium. By managing his image, he gained a nation's confidence - and they gained the inspiration the country needed.