

Rejection is part of success, but...

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Rejection is hard. Rejection can be a setback. In fact, rejection is a setback to most of us. We often don't have the right frame of mind to deal with it. We don't have the attitude to understand it. We don't have the courage to accept it.



The fact of the matter is, however, that we do experience rejection, and we have to share our bed with it. Most successful people experienced it in their early careers. I mean *really* successful people... such as Bill Gates, Elvis Presley, Henry Ford and similar.

Here, I would like to go through the list of some other rejected people who later achieved significant success despite derogatory remarks that accompanied their rejections...

Honda Sachiko, the founder of Honda Motor Company, went for the interview at Toyota many times and failed to get a job. The argument was that he was not what they were looking for and would not make the mark. He dealt with rejection by starting his own company. It may not gross as Toyota but he made comfortable living for his family.

JK Rawlings (*Harry Potter* author) was rejected by publishers at one stage. Oprah Winfrey was rejected because she was "not fit for TV", and Harland David Sanders - better known as Colonel Sanders and founder of KFC - had his business plan rejected because his recipe was "bad". Sydney Poitier was told after auditions that he should stop wasting people's time and stick to dishwashing - and he later won an Oscar. A Joburg potter, Anthony Shapiro, was turned down by the then Wits Technikon to study a ceramic course and 20 years later is sitting in the advisory board of ceramic department of the same institution.

I would like to put an emphasis on one of the remarkable achievers of our times who was rejected, possibly more than many the other successful people we know...

King of his world

Stephen King is one of the literary world's most remarkable writers, having sold over 350 million copies of his 49 novels. Some of the novels have been adapted as movies and stage plays.

"By the time I was 14 the nail in my wall would no longer support the weight of the rejection slips impaled upon it so I replaced the nail with a spike and kept on writing," said King.

Now, imagine writing an article for a newspaper and it gets rejected... Would you have courage to go on and write a short story? And if rejected again, would you go on and write a book of short stories and a novel? King's early works were rejected. His first novel was rejected, he went on and wrote the second one, rejected, he wrote the third one, rejected, fourth, rejected and fifth.

At that time, King a qualified high school English teacher but unemployed and was making a living washing linen from hotels, hospitals and restaurants. The rejections were feedback from many, many companies. One company, however, did not reject his work and had the courage to publish his first novel, and I mean the *first* novel. It became a bestseller. They then published his second novel and it also became a bestseller, and then followed the third, fourth and then fifth. They all set new sales records and King secured his great-great-great grandchildren retirement packages from the earlier rejected works.

Rejected? Get over it and hit the road

We all have a fair share of the disappointments emanating from our rejected concepts, interviews, business plans, proposals, views and similar. I'm one of the guys who founded a networking forum: Limpopo Young Professionals Network (www.lypn.co.za). The concept received its share of rejections from much-needed stakeholders. It is very depressing to present a simple, clear idea only to have critical stakeholders such as financial institutions reject it. Nevertheless, as we witnessed at the launch of LYPN, great concepts always find a way to be realised.

Those who rejected us were merely expressing their subjective judgements, which are shaped by their experiences, knowledge, socialisation and so forth, but do not represent the feeling of the majority of people out there. Those people have mistaken ice cream for foam and olive oil for poison.

You truly have the capability. You have the potential to prove the critics wrong. You have the energy to bend down, pick up the pieces, and hit the road. You need to dust yourself and continue to walk. Introduce yourself, 'Hey, Success, my name is Tinyiko. I'm here to stay. Can you please show me my space, my position. Thank you, please tell my people from now on I'm based here'.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tinyiko Maswanganyi AKA Harambe is a founding member of Limpopo Young Professionals Network (www.lypn.co.za), a platform to share ideas, meet great people and ignite entrepreneurship spirit among young professionals. The network has an FB group page with the same name.

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