

## 10 Super Easy Success Tips From a Hollywood Mogul

Not everyone can make it in Hollywood. But anyone can learn how from someone who figured it out.



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There's certainly no business like show business. Every year, the motion picture industry attracts thousands of artists, promoters and entrepreneurs. Most people at some point have thought about working in Hollywood. They often desire the spotlight, the financial success, the admiration that comes with the glitz and glam. Of occurs in reality it's super hard to be successful in Tinseltown.

Alton Butler has made it big in Hollywood, though not in the conventional sense. He started off as an actor before moving to the big city and eventually switching over into the rental business where he now runs the hugely profitable Line 204. His studios host stars like Tom Cruise and Britney Spears. He is also on the board of directors for the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce and has had the opportunity to work with major Hollywood studio producers throughout his extensive career.

By his own admission, Butler, a member of the YPO, noted that making it in Hollywood requires some tips that can help in any other major industry. Try these to make it to the big time.

### 1. Be yourself.

People often get the idea that making it in a big industry requires that you act the way other people

expect you to act. But Butler noted that staying true to who you really are makes you more admirable to others. People want to know what they can expect from you, and they will only be able to gauge that if you always act true to your values and ideals.

## **2. Recognize when opportunity knocks on the door.**

Butler's life has been defined by taking advantage of new opportunities. He was once a football player whose career was cut short by an injury. Instead of sulking over the situation, he saw it as a chance to "start using my brain more." Then he went off to Hollywood with being an actor on his mind. While acting, he noted that the productions rented everything so he bought some equipment and started a rental business out of his garage. Even today, he constantly looks for other opportunities to continue to grow his business, such as diversifying into event rentals.

## **3. Use what you got!**

Alton has both the great looks and personality that go with being a professional actor. So he charmed his way into opportunities. He then leveraged his organizational skills and became known for delivering to his customers every time, which helped him expand to own the majority of the industry market share.

## **4. Be in the relationship business.**

"Great news travels fast," asserted Butler. "Bad news travels even faster. If you let people down, it's easy for them to go to somebody else. But if you have a relationship with them and you know their dog's name and their mom's name and you can be a part of their lives, they will want to keep working with you. Building great relationships lasts forever. We rent the same stuff as the other rental guys. The only way we can separate ourselves from the other guys is relationships. We are in the relationship business, not the rental business."

## **5. Play to your strengths.**

Because they want to grow quickly, people often spread themselves thin by trying to dabble in different areas beyond their expertise. The result is that they never get anywhere. Butler made it clear that his success was the result of playing to his strengths. When he expanded his business, he grew organically, staying within the rental business instead of trying to go into other businesses that he had no experience with. "I didn't look to get into the restaurant business but was constantly looking for other kinds of rentals within the industry that I could expand into," he explained.

## **6. Never stop working on your own growth.**

Just because you've made it in the business does not mean that you should be complacent with your achievements. Doing so will stop you from developing and generating new opportunities. Instead, Butler recommends taking stock of your shortcomings and looking for ways to overcome them. "Examine your



own flaws. You must constantly look to reinvent yourself. You can only be number one for so long before you fall back," he revealed.

### **7. Listen to the feedback.**

Butler credits the growth of his business to other people, particularly clients that allow him insights into the problems persisting in the industry. He has an open-door policy in which he gladly meets with people to find out where he can improve and what they want from him. "Talking to other people and asking them about their frustrations with other rental companies is what has helped me decide where to make my next step. Asking them what I think I can do better has also been key. Your client will tell you what to do if you listen," he affirmed. Listening to a customer is how he started the "Client lounges," which is potentially leading him into the event rental business.

### **8. Support other people's dreams.**

In a hierarchical system, as Hollywood can be, it is easy for those on top to look down at those sitting at the bottom of the pyramid and ignore them. If Butler did that, he would never have gotten the opportunity to work with major filmmakers such as Brett Ratner, who has directed such films as "Rush Hour," "X-Men: The Last Stand" and produced dozens of major studio productions. Ratner was a client of Butler when he was starting out and Butler helped get him equipment for his early music videos. Eventually Ratner came back when he landed the big gig, and Butler's company was the one doing business on a far larger scale. "Today's [Production Assistant] will be tomorrow's decision makers," he stated. "If you help somebody get to the top, they won't forget you."

### **9. Embrace competition.**

Competition can be uncomfortable for people looking to grow, particularly in cut-throat businesses like the movie industry where everyone is looking to get into the spotlight and in front of the shiny lights. But Butler appreciates competition as it gives him an opportunity to see how others are approaching his business. "I love to see some of the things that they do because it makes me better," he added.

### **10. Always be humble.**

"There is always someone faster, better looking, quicker, smarter. There is always someone better," admitted Butler. "The humbleness keeps you grounded and looking for improvement."

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