



Mike Jones

CEO of Clover Capital Management

*"Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you."
Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The secret to Mike Jones' success lies in the influence that others in his life had over him during particularly impressionable moments of his life. From an early age, Mike was privileged to know several admirable individuals who he developed great relationships with, and who each had something to teach him. Sometimes in the form of direct advice and other times just in the form of acting as an inspiration to him, the lessons they imparted would form the turning points of Mike's life and set him on the path to become the success that he is today.

The first of Mike's turning points came in the form of his childhood family physician, Dr. Park Horton. Mike grew up in an incredibly small town of only about 800 people, so he got a chance to know the inhabitants there fairly well. The one who stood out the most to Mike was the local physician, Dr. Horton, who would come to exercise a great deal of influence over Mike's development. As Mike saw the respect the physician commanded as he traveled around town making house calls with his black bag, he realized that in many ways, everyone in the town depended on Dr. Horton; he was the town in some sense.

Mike admired this about Dr. Horton and decided that he wanted to emulate that level of importance in his own life. He began to cultivate an interest in the healthcare field, and when the time eventually came for Mike to attend school,

this is the path he chose. He went off to college with the intention of becoming an optometrist. It was there that he met not only his future wife, but also the second person to have a major influence on his life.

Professor Joel Thinnes was one of the youngest professors at Mike's junior college and as such, had a great deal of rapport with the students, especially Mike. One day he questioned Mike about what plans he had for his future, and when Mike replied that he wanted to become an optometrist, which was a very respectable trade, Thinnes replied that Mike had disappointed him. Previously, Mike had heard nothing but praise over his choice in career, and was shocked at this sudden reversal. When questioned further, Thinnes indicated that the reason for his response was that optometry was a field that would be easy for a person of Mike's intellectual capabilities. He wanted Mike to challenge himself with something more demanding he said, and questioned why he didn't take his studies further and become an ophthalmologist. "Reach for more," was his motto.

Mike gave this some thought. Thinnes continued his encouragement, even to the point of taking him to visit other college campuses where Mike could finish his undergraduate degree. The insistence paid off and Mike eventually enrolled at the University of Rochester, where he studied pre-medicine.

In order to get the most out of his studies, Mike took a part time job in the emergency department at Strong Memorial Hospital, where he would get to work alongside doctors and assist in basic clinical duties in order to gain valuable experience. It would be an eye-opening experience for Mike, as it revealed to him the less glamorous side of the medical profession. Working amid the stress and trauma of the emergency room brought Mike to the conclusion that medicine was not the field for him after all.

The change in career plan did not dim his respect for his two mentors. Mike continued to see the value in their lessons. He hadn't admired Dr. Horton simply because he was a doctor, but rather because he was a central figure in his community - someone who anybody could turn to and who helped to get things done. Likewise, Thinner had meant well by pushing Mike to challenge himself, and even if he didn't come to accept the particular profession of medicine, the lesson to **reach for more and not be satisfied with what was easily attainable** was a valuable one that he intended to carry with him.

Still quite young, and now with no particular plans for what to do with his life, Mike became engaged to his girlfriend; but right after they announced their plans, her father suffered a major heart attack. Wanting to help out, Mike took over control of the ailing man's real estate business, intending to run it until he got better. Using the skills he had learned from his mentors, together with his own ambition and perseverance, Mike began to excel in the real estate market. Mike gained new confidence from the realization that he was able to succeed in business, and began to push his ambitions to still further limits.

After his wife's father recovered, Mike applied for a job as a research analyst for an investment firm and found that the position was one that was perfectly suited for him in every way. Here, he was able to help people with their investment issues, similar to how Dr. Horton helped them with health issues. Also, his longstanding studies in the hard sciences had made him perfectly suited for the analytical aspects of the job, something that kept him constantly challenged and striving for more.

Eventually, Mike would build even further on his investment career. With a coworker by the name of Geoff Rosenberger, they started their own firm, Clover Capital. Now he performed the same service, analyzing the stock market and investing people's money for them in profitable ways. After a slow start where he found people reluctant about handing over their funds to someone so young, Mike and Geoff's company took off and today, Mike enjoys a level of success

beyond what he ever would have imagined if not for the influence of his mentors.

The ultimate value of Mike's turning points and the lessons that he has been taught seems to be that **one must be ambitious and aim for the top, but one must also do what one loves**. As Mike himself puts it:

"I think that there's no substitute for hard work. It's impossible to work hard at something you don't like, though. So find something that you do like and work as hard as you can at it."

Furthermore, Mike's turning points have left him with the continual urge to reach higher and higher. Thanks to the influence of his mentors, this desire to go higher is so ingrained in Mike that he says he is not fearful of obstacles. Rather, when confronted with difficulty, his natural response is just to embrace the challenge and get to work to find a way to overcome it rather than to worry about it. It's certain that this confident, "strive for the best" approach has contributed greatly to Mike's amazing success in his field.