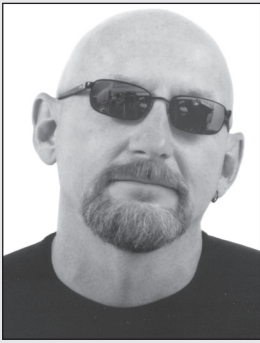


## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot!

Larry Winget



**Larry Winget** is a personal development speaker who teaches universal principles by telling humorous stories. He believes that most of us have complicated lives and businesses and need to lighten up. Winget's customers include associations, businesses and organizations. He speaks around the country approximately 100 times per year, sharing his insights and principles in the areas of success, leadership, customer service and sales. He is a 2002 member of the National Speakers Association Speakers Hall of Fame and is the author of several books, videos and audiotape series. His most recent book, "Shut Up, Stop Whining & Get a Life: A Kick-Butt Approach to a Better Life," reached No. 1 on the Wall Street Journal business books list.

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**L**et's get started this morning with a couple of questions: how many of you would rather be more successful in the future than you ever been in the past? Raise your hand and say, "you bet." How many of you rather make more money in the future than you ever did in the past? Say, "you bet." How many also want to have a good time this morning? Say, "you bet." How many of you want to walk out those doors better looking than when you first walked in. Say, "you bet." Now some of you all didn't answer that last one; believe me, you should have too. I want you to know now normally when I tell folks we're going to have a good time, they think I'm going to do a lot of jokes. We need to get this straight right now; I don't do any jokes. I used to do a lot of jokes; I used to do a lot of bald jokes. Then I looked in the mirror one day and decided there wasn't anything funny about that. Being bald is tough. First of all, it's tough on your love life. If all of the hair fell out of your dog, would you want to pet it? That's why I grew a beard. Before I grew the beard, people thought I looked like a big thumb. I would just walk down the streets and cars would pull over and say, "hey, buddy, you need a ride?" One other reason I grew the beard is I need this little bit of hair right there because I don't have a chin. It's not a big deal not having a chin; it does make it hard to change pillow cases though.

There is only one good thing about not having hair: bald guys live longer. That is absolutely statistically true. You people should know that bald men live longer. A 92-year-old man sent his wife to the doctor one day. The doctor examined her and could not believe what he found out. He made her go out to the waiting room; twenty minutes later, he did a second examination and again was astounded at what he discovered. He made her go back out to the waiting room. Finally, when he brought her in at the end of the third examination, he turned to her and said, "Ma'am, I don't know how to break this to you but you're going to have a baby." She said, "I can't be going to have a baby; my husband is 92 years old." The doctor said, "I don't care if he's a 192, you're still going to have a baby." She said, Well, I better call him and let him know." When

## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot! *(continued)*

she reaches for the telephone, the doctor stops her and says, "Now just a minute, that is an old man; you're going to want to break that to him pretty gently." She said, "Don't worry, I will." She picked up the phone and dialed. When the old man answered the phone, the first thing out of her mouth was, "You old coot, you got me pregnant." He said, "Who is this?" And he didn't have any hair either.

By the way, did you like my introduction – just "here is Larry Winget"? I hate introductions; I do, I hate introductions. I hate everybody's introductions; and that's not like most people in my business. Professional speakers like their introductions. You all have heard speakers with long introductions. Speakers like their long introductions because that is their only opportunity to tell you all of the amazing stuff they've done in the past in order to build up their credibility so you will want to pay attention to them. And, like you, I sit out there in the audience listening to those long introductions and I'm always wondering if they were so good at doing all of that, then why do they have to do this. I was never any good at doing all that; I have to do this. Besides that, I figured out nobody cares how good you use to be. Isn't that true? You're the 68<sup>th</sup> speech I've done so far this year; with my first 67, I was amazing. You people don't care, you just hope I'm going to be pretty good right now. How's that any different for you? Does anybody care how good you used to be? No, you have to be good every single time you show up. How many of you all are having a pretty good year this year? Put your hands down, no one cares. You have to be good all the time.

Let me tell you what I do for a living. I go all over the world and I talk to all kinds of businesses and organizations and associations about what I think it takes to be more successful, to make more money and to have more fun. I don't care who you are or what you do, if there is anything in the world all of us have in common it is we all want more success, more money, more fun. Isn't that right? Say, "you bet." It's not that hard. It's not. We just made it hard; in fact, some people want it to be hard. Some of you are saying, "That doesn't even make any sense; why would anybody want those things to be hard?" I'll tell you why; because if we buy into the idea those things are hard then

we will have an excuse for not doing well. I don't think there is an excuse for not doing well. I think everyone has the ability to do well so I just remind people how simple it really is.

I do believe it's simple. We all get the hard stuff. I've never met anybody in my whole life that didn't get the hard stuff. It's the hard stuff we get; simple stuff we don't get. Yet it's the simple stuff that makes the biggest difference. You showed up this morning; for some of you, based on last night, that was hard. Yet it's the hard stuff that we get; the simple stuff we don't get. I was reminded one day how important simple things were when I was standing on my front porch. I have two boys. We were standing out on my front porch when a big thundercloud came in. My younger son said, "Dad, do you realize that cloud right there is 97% water?" Now I did not know that; I guess he learned that in junior high school and thought it was a good time to share it with me. I didn't think too much about it till I was doing some reading. I read that a watermelon is 94% water. Did you all realize that a watermelon missed being a thundercloud by only 3%? It's not a big difference but it makes a big difference. It's the simple stuff that makes the biggest difference.

In the last 15 years I have read over 3,000 books, books on every subject you can imagine: books on leadership and sales and customer service and team building, books on how to get rich, books on how to get healthy, books on staying rich and staying healthy. Many of those books cover thousands of years of information; and after reading a few thousand books this is what I have discovered: there are only 18 good ideas in the whole world. We complicated them and we didn't need to. Today I don't have time for 18 good ideas but I have time for just a couple.

Here's the very first good idea. You have to take responsibility. Sir, you don't write that down. I can't imagine where you've been in your life if suddenly that just hit you as a good idea. The hardest thing anybody ever does in their whole life is take responsibility.

From the day you are born until the day you die, the toughest thing you're ever going to do in your entire lifetime is go to the mirror, look yourself in the eye and say,

## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot! *(continued)*

“you know, this is all my fault.” We don’t like doing that; we’re not good at taking responsibility.

The next idea is flexibility. Flexibility, in my opinion, is the key to just about everything. Flexibility is the key to getting along with each other. Flexibility is the key to dealing with our clients, our customers. Flexibility is the key to dealing with change. Let me ask you, is your industry changing? You bet. I’ve discovered people hate change. They hate change yet we are told we should embrace change. People don’t want to embrace change, they want to hate it. Most people would rather things just stay bad than have go through the changes it would take to get good again. They would rather do anything than deal with more change.

Did you know that the most popular topic for any platform in the world in the business of professional speaking is about how to deal with change more than any other topic. Now that amazes me; change has been around for a pretty good long while. I think we should have figured something out. But obviously we haven’t, so we’re actually paying people to teach us how to deal with change. People call my office, talk to my manager and ask, “Does Larry have a speech on how to deal with change?” I have one; it’s not very long. If you’re having a problem dealing with change, you need my speech. If you know other people who are having a problem dealing with change, you are going to enjoy giving them my speech. This is my speech on how to deal with change: “shut up, stop whining, and get a life.” It’s a good speech, isn’t it? A lot of people don’t like that speech. They say, “But Larry, you don’t understand; you don’t know what we’re going through.” You’re right. I don’t understand and I don’t know what you’re going through; and I don’t care. I’ll guarantee I can find somebody going through a whole lot more than you are and they still figured out a way to be successful. Isn’t that right? Say, “you bet.” So shut up and deal with it.

I have written over 20 books. My new book is called, Shut Up, Stop Whining and Get a Life. The book has done real well; it’s hit number 1 on five best seller lists. I’m real proud of it. For a long time I was not going to write this book. I decided that the title was so good, I didn’t

really need the book. Once you said it, you pretty much said it. Before I had the book, I had T-shirts made with the title. Usually when I speak, I have books and tapes and DVD’s and CD’s and T-shirts. People will come to the back of the room where all the stuff is, they’ll look at everything on the table and then they stop and look at the shirt and then look at me and they always say the very same thing. They always say, “I know somebody who needs that shirt.” How many you all right now know somebody who needs that shirt. I get so sick and tired of hearing that. Because it’s always somebody else who needs the shirt, I just did a new run. We printed it upside down so you could look down and read it yourself. I think we all, all of us every once in a while, ought a just be told to shut up and stop whining. Isn’t that right? Say, “You bet.”

People love to whine. For some people whining has become their very best friend. Believe it or not, I am the wrong guy to whine to. I did one of these not long ago, a guy caught me outside the room, came running up to me, stopped me and he said, “You know, Larry, I was watching you up there. I’m just betting you’re doing all right, but I’m not doing so well. But you really don’t understand; I mean you don’t have to work with those people I got to work with. My boss is an idiot. You don’t have to go home to my wife and you’re not putting up with my kids.” Then he got his finger involved and that always bothers me. He said, “You haven’t been through what I’ve been through and you’re not going through what I’m going through right now, and you just don’t get it. My life sucks.” I said, Well, let me help you with this: it’s because you suck. I mean really if your life sucks, whose fault is it? I didn’t do it; and I think it works that way in every single area, I really do. I think if your business sucks, it’s because as a business person you suck; and I think if your sales suck, it’s because as a sales person you suck; and if your employees are a mess, it’s because as a manager you suck; and if your customer service sucks, it’s because you deliver sucky customer service.”

Have you all figured out yet I’m not really a motivational speaker? Actually I’m billed as the world’s only irritational speaker. There was a time in my life I called

## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot! *(continued)*

myself a motivational speaker and all the biggest motivational speakers in the world are my best buddies. But I quit calling myself a motivational speaker and here's why: every single one of them is a liar. They are; you know they're liars. You've heard them stand on stage and lie to you; you just didn't call them on it. I don't let them get by with it. You've heard them stand on stage and say stupid stuff, stuff that didn't make any sense, stuff like this: "as long as you have a good positive attitude, everything in your life will be all right." You have heard them say that. I've had a good positive attitude all my life and I've had more crap happen to me. Having a good positive attitude won't keep anything from happening to you; it will just help you deal with all the crap that does happen to you. We need the ability to deal with what happens to us because it's going to happen. I'm a pretty positive guy; I'm so positive that when I travel, I carry a hair dryer; if I'm feeling real optimistic I plug that sucker in, too.

I'll tell you another thing motivational people are telling you, you've heard them say this, this is one of my brand new favorites, it's on all the TV shows, you hear it a lot. They say, "The key to being successful is to just be yourself." Just be yourself! What if you're stupid? What if you're a jerk? What if you're a stupid jerk? Why don't you be someone else for awhile? Here's one that goes hand in hand with that: as long as you feel really good about yourself, you can just do anything. That is a total waste of your time, I promise you. They're wrong. We don't make positive change in our lives when we feel good about things; we make positive change in our lives when we get uncomfortable with things, isn't that true? When you're sick and tired of being sick and tired, you might just do something about it. That's how it is. Let me give you an example: you all are sitting in those chairs, you're going to sit in those chairs exactly the way you're sitting until the moment you become uncomfortable and, at the moment you become uncomfortable, that's when you shift and you move and you change in order to again become comfortable. As long as you're comfortable, you're just going to sit there. That works that way when you sit in your chair, and it works that way in your personal life.

I guarantee it works that same way in your business. We don't make changes until we're first a bit uncomfortable. The key to dealing with that change is flexibility. We just have to know what to be flexible with; we have to know what to be inflexible with. We have to learn to be flexible with how we do things because how we do things is going to change. We have to learn to be inflexible with why we do things because why we do things never changes. I don't care what you do for a living, all of us do what we do for one reason and one reason only and that's to serve others well; knowing that the better you serve others, the better you are in turn served. Yet you have to be flexible with how you do that.

I don't see a lot of flexibility in this world, I really don't. In fact, when I go in restaurants anymore if the food even shows up, I have a party. Customer service is bad. There's no flexibility anywhere. Retail is terrible in terms of flexibility. I was in a retail store the other day and the clerk was so rude to me, I finally stopped and said, "You don't seem to understand the basics of business; you are expense, I am revenue." He didn't have a clue to what I was talking about.

I'm walking through the mall one day and I realize I need to stop and get some batteries. I see a store in the mall that sells batteries. I'm not going to say the name of that store but I will tell you their first product was a radio and they started in a shack someplace. I had my two boys with me. We walk into the store, I see the batteries hanging on the wall. I walk over to the wall, pull the batteries down off the wall, walk up, lay the batteries flat down on the counter. I put cash money right next to the batteries. A clerk walks up on the other side of the counter, he looks at the batteries, he looks at my money, he looks at me and my two boys and smiles and says, "Sir, could I have your name, address and telephone number?" Have you ever have that happen? Sure you have. I said, "As a matter of fact, no."

If you want to start having some fun in life, get good at saying "no." In fact if you want to have a really good time, when you all leave this conference and get back to where you live go to McDonalds. When you go to McDonalds, go to the drive in lane; and when you're in the drive in

## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot! *(continued)*

lane you'll pull up there to that first window, you'll reach up and hand them your money. They will reach out and hand you your change and they will say to you, "If you'll just pull right up there to that second window, we'll have your food out to you." Just say, "Nope, I think I'm going to wait right here." You'll screw up two hundred happy meals; it will be worth it.

I said, "No, I'm not going to give you my name, address and telephone number." He said, "Sir, I have to have your name, address and telephone number in order to sell you the batteries." I said, "Why is it so important for you to get that information?" That's when he told me the number one thing that no customer ever wants to hear; he said, "Sir, because that's our company policy." I said, "I have a customer policy and my customer policy says for a \$1.79 worth of batteries that I'm paying you cash, I don't have to tell you who I am." At that point he puts his hands on the batteries, slides them across the counter, steps back and says, "Sir, we can't do business with you." I said, "Is that right? Do you have a manager here?" He said, "We have a manager in the back." I said, "I suggest you go get your manager." He goes in the back and comes back out with what I recognize right off to be a manager: it's a kid about 19 comes walking down the aisle toward the counter. He gets right across the counter from me, puts his finger just to my nose and says, "Bud, do you have a problem?" Do you all remember the movie The Blues Brothers? In the movie Jake and Elwood are sitting in the front seat of that old cop car. Jake turns to Elwood and says, "Elwood, we got a six pack of beer, a full tank of gas and we're on a mission from God." Put a 19 year old kid with his finger in my face saying "Bud, do you have a problem" and I'm Elwood Blues on a mission from God. I said, "I don't have a problem. You have batteries, I have money. We call that a deal." He said, "yeah, and you're going to give us your name, address and telephone number or I'm not letting you have the batteries." I said, "It's not going to happen. He's already told me its company policy; I don't care. I have a customer policy. I want you, the manager, to tell me why it's so important for you to get that information." That's when he told me the number two thing no customer

ever wants to hear; he said, "Sir, because that's the way we have always done it." I said, "You know, I have good news because today you're going to get a chance to do it differently." At that point, he puts his hands on the batteries, slides them across the counter, steps back and said, "We're not doing business with you" and turns around.

Now at that point my younger son is saying, "Dad, can we go?" My older son, though, is going, "Yes!" Have any of you all had experience with obnoxious teenage boys? Mine use to be a piece of work. They're grown men now, but when they were younger I noticed boys, when they become teenagers, are not interested in school anymore. They have two primary interests in the entire world: girls and cars. I'm not sure we ever really outgrow that. My older one walked in at the end of his last semester, threw his report card and his car keys down in front of me and said, "There, I'm tired of driving anyway." At least he took responsibility, right?

So here we stand, one kid embarrassed to death and the other one egging me on and this manager walking away. I said, "Excuse me just a minute, don't walk away. You're the manager; you ought to be able to figure out something you can do in order to get to keep my money. After all I'm the customer. I ought to be able to leave with the product I came in here for and, believe it or not, I'm still willing to pay for; so don't you dare walk away until you at least stop and think about this for a minute." He said, "All right, all right, all right, let me think." He turns around and walks back over to his computer and starts to type. In just a minute, he turns around, takes my money and puts it in the drawer, he hands me some change, he takes those batteries and drops them in a bag, then he pulls a receipt out of the computer, puts it in the bag with the batteries, hands it to me and says, "There you go, sir, thank you very much. I figured it out." I said, "What did you figure out?" He said, "Well I just put my name, address and telephone number on your receipt." This kid is not a brain surgeon because at this point he has an unhappy customer walking out the front door of his business with his name, address and his home telephone number and I'm still on a mission from God.

## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot! *(continued)*

He didn't understand and yet what's sad, in fact I think it's pitiful, is he did exactly as he had been trained to do. You all know people like that; you work with people like that; shoot, some of you may be people like that so caught up in how we do things that sometimes we forget why we do things. I don't care who you are and what you do, I think we all do what we do for one reason and one reason only and that's to serve others well knowing that the better you serve them, the better you are in turn served. If you agree, say "you bet."

The last idea is I think we need to lighten up and have more fun. I think it's a solid business principal. I think we ought to have as much fun as we possibly can every single day knowing that the more fun we have at who we are and what we do, the better we will be at what we do and the more people will want to join us in that experience. If we don't like what we do, I don't think we will ever be any good at it. I'm convinced excellence comes from enjoyment. I know that concept is hard for some people; some people have no sense of humor. You all know people like that, people who are going to die of terminal professionalism. Now if you didn't get that one, it's probably you.

I run into people with no sense of humor. I was doing a speech in Cancun and my wife was with me. Cancun's a popular convention city. We're walking through one of the malls; it's a mall where all the designer stores were. There was a Gucci store, a Fendi store, Ralph Lauren store, Guess store, one little store right after the other. As we're walking past all the stores, out in front of the Guess store is what we would call a big old boy. You all know what a big old boy looks like, folks. This big old boy had just been in the Guess store, bought himself a brand new Guess shirt with the word "Guess" written across the front, letters about that big. He's already put his shirt on and he's standing out there in front of the store. I see him standing there, stop in front of him, look him up and down and say, "Oh about 375." This fella had no sense of humor. My wife said, "I cannot believe you said that to that man." I said, "It said Guess right there."

She's still a little amazed at what I actually do for a living. In fact I said to her the other day, "Honey, in your wildest dreams did you ever believe I'd be doing this?" She said, "Larry, in my wildest dreams you don't even show up." The key to having a good time is pay attention there's more funny stuff out there if you'll pay attention. I was doing a speech in Las Vegas. As I'm walking down the hall on the way to the meeting room, I see a sign on one of the doors. The sign said, "No exit. This is not an entrance." What do you call a door you can't go in or out? A wall, I guess.

I was doing a couple of speeches in Canada. I had a day in between the speeches so I was taking a tour of one of their local wineries. As I toured the winery, I found this little sign used to hang in the bathroom of the winery. It said, "If this bathroom needs attention, please inform the tasting room staff."

I was doing a very small meeting in Little Rock, Arkansas. It was like a typical convention even though there weren't very many people there. When you show up at a convention, normally you register by the first letter of your last name; so they always have booths or tables or whatever with signs above them to let you know which line you should be in based on the first letter of your last name. The signs always say things like A-G, H-M and so forth to let you know which line to get in. Now this was a small meeting with one little folding table that held two little temporary signs. I guess at this meeting they decided not to sign up by the first letter of the last name but instead by category of individual and they only had two categories of individuals. They were the A-HO's and the HU-Z's. When I got there, it was easy for me to know which line I was supposed to be in; I get called this all the time.

You can have a good time no matter who you are and no matter where you are. I spend almost every single day of my life on an airplane. I travel about 250 days a year. I'm on lots of airplanes and I've noticed on airplanes that every single airline magazine in the world today has the very same advertisement in it. It's the ad for the logo watches. I decided I wanted one of those watches but I wanted



## Success is Simple, Money is Easy, and Life is a Hoot!

my watch to be exactly like the one in the ad; I wanted my watch to say “your logo here.” I tore the ad out, put some money with it, sent it into the company. About two weeks later, a lady from the company called and said, “Sir, you don’t seem to understand.” I said, “What is it I don’t understand?” She said, “Sir, you’re supposed to put your logo here.” I said, “Actually that’s exactly what I want you to do.” She said, “What do you want us to do?” I said, “Put your logo here.” She said, “No sir, not our logo, your logo.” I said, “You complicated this, Just type ‘Your l o g o h e r e’, stick it on a watch and mail it to me.” She said, “Sir, why are you doing that?” I said, “Because it’s funny.” The funny thing is to be on the airplane wearing your watch and then, when you notice the guy in the seat next to you reading that ad, you poke him and say, “Hey, I got me one of those.”

That’s the only time I want to talk to anybody on an airplane. I hate to talk to people on airplanes. They’ll always put me next to somebody that wants to tell me their whole life story and, believe me, I really don’t care. I came up with a guaranteed way to make sure nobody talks to me on an airplane; I designed these fake book covers you can wrap around whatever paperback book you’re reading. You can lay one of them or all three of them on the armrest between the seats and I’ll guarantee you they won’t say one word to you. The first one is How To Sue The Person In The Seat Next To You On An Airplane. Then we have Finding Love On An Airplane. My favorite and by far the most effective is How To Sell Insurance To People On Airplanes. They see that one, believe me, they’re not talking.