

# THE 55-CENT CAREER CHANGER

How One Handwritten Note can Change  
Everything! by Randy Brown, Master  
Networker and Host of Elite Coach Mentoring



by Randy Brown

# The 55-Cent Career Changer

*Why the Hand Written Note Beats Technology Every Time*

*What if I told you that a hand written note is your greatest weapon? Would you believe it?*

*After reading the 55-cent Career Changer you'll look at things in a much different way.*

*The US Postal Service price of a Forever stamp is now 55 cents. One stamp can send a note that may have a dramatic impact on you, your career, brand, and business.*

*I've seen it happen dozens and dozens of times and I teach the "art of the handwritten note" to aspiring college basketball coaches.*



This story of Ryan McIntyre will unveil the process of the hand written note and the power it can hold for you and your career.

Ryan McIntyre, currently an assistant coach at Austin Peay University in Clarksville, TN.

In August 2011 I received a call from 18-year old Ryan, saying he had seen my name on while doing a search for "becoming a college basketball manager." The recent high school graduate would be attending West Virginia University that month as a freshman. His goal was to become a college basketball coach, but thought the best route was to become a manager on the men's basketball team.

The conversation went like this:

RB What are your goals? Do you want to be a college coach?

RM Yes, but everyone tells me it's not a realistic goal.

RB That's why you called me, right?

RM I heard you helped young coaches prepare to get college jobs.

RB You heard right and you are no exception. First and foremost, you have to do FOUR things to just get started.

#1-Read my bio and background in coaching so you know of my expertise and experience.

#2-Decide that being a manager is what you really want. It has to be a 100% commitment, or it won't ever happen. Understand the time and sacrifices you'll have to make to be a manager. It is a very serious position to hold, and you will not have the normal college experience, as others will.

#3-If you decide to work with me, you must follow my direction every step of the way without exception. Some of my

methods are out of the box and will seem crazy, but you have to know that they work if you follow along carefully.

#4-Never quit!

RM Coach, I promise that I will do all four things. I just want a chance. I haven't done anything to be a manager so far. I don't know any of the coaches so I don't know how to go about asking about being a manager.

RB As long as you can execute those FOUR things, you'll be fine, believe me. I will be really disappointed if you don't become a manager first, and eventually down the road, an actual college basketball coach.

RM Really coach?

RB Yes!

Ryan and I began talking on the phone every 3-4 days. He was on a crash course to becoming a student manager at the University of West Virginia. In no particular order, here are the things we worked on to get him up to speed.

1. Devise a plan for him to become a student manager, starting with meeting one of the coaches.
2. Learn how to speak to the secretary on the phone and in person. To do this, we created work tracks and role-played conversations and situations that would arise.
3. Created a resume of his background and basketball experience including his take on why he wanted to be a manager.

4. Grew to understand how much time and how much work this manager position would consume. He had to work around his class schedule to have time to dedicate to his duties, if in fact he was ever given duties.

I enjoyed my time working with Ryan because he was one of the few young guys who really "got it." He bought into what I taught him and it paid off.

The advantage Ryan had was that I knew the coaches on the Mountaineer staff. First he went to the office to introduce himself to the secretary, and then ask if Coach Billy Hahn was available to speak with. He wore a polo shirt and slacks with polished shoes to his first trip to the basketball office to give that good first impression.

It took Ryan three times before he was able to even meet Coach Hahn. We had practiced his "lines" over and over and it was important that he got in front of the coach to indicate his goals. I had known Billy Hahn for years and he was a guy that could intimidate a younger man like Ryan. Ryan help his ground and did a good job talking to Billy that day.

He was told to check back in a week. This was a victory, because he could have easily been told they didn't need any managerial help and that would have ended his dream.

A week later Ryan went back to the basketball offices to meet with Coach Hahn. But in the meantime I asked him to do something that was very important.

I told him to write a handwritten note to Coach Hahn and mail it to the West Virginia basketball office. I talked him through the key points of what kind of stationary to use, what to say, what color of pen to use, and what to add to the note to add value. He did!

When he showed up a week later Billy thanked him for the personal note he sent him. Later Billy would tell me he was really surprised that Ryan had taken the time and thought to send a nice, handwritten note thanking him for his time that day. Billy was impressed!

Fast-forward to a few weeks later and Ryan McIntyre called me to say he was being asked to show up in the office three times a week to "staple" and fill envelopes. He was in his glory now because he had officially begun helping the basketball program in an "unofficial" capacity. Next, he was asked to meet all of the other managers, coaches, and support staff. In time, he was part of the organization even with his limited role. Ryan served as a full-time manager for the three years following his limited-role freshman year. He traveled to every Big 12 arena, the Big 12 Tournament, and the NCAA Tournament during his time at West Virginia. He became a staple in the program and was known as a young man who could be counted on to do the dirty work and never complain. I often reminded him that had Coach Hahn not asked him to come back a week later on that September day, none of this would be a reality.

### *The Power of a simple hand written note*

Little did Ryan realize how pivotal that hand written note to Coach Billy Hahn was that day? He simply followed my instructions not knowing why I had asked him to do such a seemingly meaningless task.

Networking is about connecting to people; people of influence that can help you in your career. A face-to-face encounter is the #1 way to meet people and impact their impression of you. Unfortunately, face-to-face contact is rare. How can you

start a relationship or nurture an existing relationship with a connection without being there in person?

### *The Hand Written Note!*

The one thing Ryan learned in his journey to becoming the lead man for the West Virginia managerial staff is the importance of details, preparation, and follow up.

He learned from me that a 55-cent stamp transports a personal note across the country in a matter of days. The potential of that 55-cent investment is immeasurable and can be career changing!

Ryan became a very consistent hand writer and I put him on a writing schedule to make sure he was always reaching out to new and current relationships. With his writing schedule he determined WHO to write, WHEN to write them, and WHAT to write. All of these are an important part of any writing strategy. He became creative in his efforts to stand out and make a positive impression with each note. With each note he wrote, his circle of influence grew and grew. Knowing the growth potential of the "six degree" legend, each day he saw more and more people connect with him.

Eventually Ryan graduated and was poised to accept a job from his boss, Bob Huggins, right there in Morgantown. But a change of plans was on the way. Bob's good friend and coaching mentee, Frank Martin, was in need of a good young assistant capable of tackling many different duties. Martin, an assistant for Huggins at Kansas State just years before, was the head coach in the Southeast Conference, namely at the University of South Carolina. Huggins thought it may be a good move to encourage Ryan to look into an opening at South

Carolina and get a different look at the game under a different coach.

### *The Power of Hand Writing Strikes Again*

As Ryan expressed interest in the South Carolina position that Martin had available, he had to laugh and pat himself on the back. He had been writing hand written notes to Martin for the past three years, knowing both coaches were connected. If he did a good job for Huggins and began to nurture a relationship with USC's Martin, there may be a job there someday. That someday became a reality and Ryan McIntyre took an assistant video coordinator position on Frank Martin's staff in the summer of 2016.

That season the Gamecocks erupted with a historical season, Ryan's first. They stormed through post-season conference play and began beating everyone in sight in the 2017 NCAA Tournament. It culminated in an appearance in March Madness highest calling, the Final Four.





At the age of 23, Ryan McIntyre was a coach for a Final Four team, an accomplishment less than 1% of all college coaches will ever experience. Many times during that Final Four I would see him behind the bench and shake my head. To his credit, from that first call he made to me, he was a student and all he wanted to do is learn how to get his chance. He listened, he learned, and he accomplished an amazing, career-defining accomplishment.

*The story is not over!*

At the end of that Cinderella season, South Carolina's associate head coach, Matt Figger, was named the new head coach at Austin Peay University. As Figger began to assemble his staff he brought Ryan McIntyre on as an assistant, a jump from his position at USC. Ryan had now become a full-time assistant at one of the Ohio Valley Conference's best schools. Their two-year record of 25-11 is witness to the job they are doing in Clarksville, TN and the future is bright for the Governors.



The story continues and will for a while. Ryan McIntyre is one of the rising stars among young assistant coaches in the nation and will soon make his next move up the ladder. Don't be surprised if you are catching an ESPN game in the years to

come and hear that familiar voice, "head coach Ryan McIntyre."

And yes, to this day Ryan is an immaculate hand writer with a large, deep and thriving coaching network.

Never underestimate the value of a 55-cent stamp!

