

THE BUCKET LIST:

**A Proven Expert at Turning the Wildest Dreams into Reality Shows How You Too Can
Achieve the Impossible**

Find your adventure and happiness - no matter your budget

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OVERVIEW

On the surface, Steve Sims' job, if you can call it that, is to run his company, Bluefish - an exclusive luxury concierge service for the elite. But when it comes down to it, he is in the business of making people's dreams come true. These aren't everyday dreams, but rather the stuff of childhood imagination: outrageous, impossible adventures that 99.99% of the human race have never experienced and never will. He has sent his billionaire clients to the bottom of the ocean (to tour the sunken Titanic), to the outer limits of space (in a rocketship), and even to the outer limits of human sensory perception (feeling what it's like to break the sound barrier in a supersonic jet). From rocking out onstage with the band Journey to dining at the feet of Michelangelo's David, the fantasies that these lucky individuals get to live out are extraordinary in every way. For them, it is about fulfilling a dream - but it is also about not letting life pass them by without a fight.

In Steve's line of work, he often hears the term "bucket list." The phrase - meaning a list of things to do before you die, or "kick the bucket" - was popularized by the 2007 movie starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman. The words have a light, frivolous ring to them but they hint at something deeper.

What drives Steve and gets him up in the morning is passion. He is not in it for the money. He is an East London boy from a working-class background. What he sees when he helps other people live out their bucket-list fantasies is more than just rich dudes looking for thrills. To Steve, it's all about finding your happiness. Not the adult version of happiness but the feeling we have as children, which is truer to who we really are deep down. It's the pure joy that so many of us bury as we become successful grownups with jobs and families and responsibilities.

Now, with his first book, Steve recounts some of the most extraordinary adventures he has helped his clients accomplish, everything from getting married by the Pope at the Vatican to getting chased by spies in Monaco in an elaborate James Bond simulation. Moreover, he uses

these wild, colorful stories as a springboard for a deep dive into the whole concept of the bucket list, and the bigger theme of what truly matters in life. It may sound strange coming from a guy who hobnobs with the rich and famous, but if there's one thing Steve has learned, it's that money can't buy you happiness.

Throughout the chapters, he shares his secrets for achieving the impossible and making your own bucket-list dreams come true. You don't have to be a billionaire. All you need is this book.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in the United Kingdom, **Steve Sims** launched his bespoke international travel and lifestyle concierge firm, Bluefish, in the early 1990s. Trying to get a foothold in the financial world, he traveled to Hong Kong, where he applied a rather odd approach to gaining clientele: he partied with them - or more accurately, orchestrated all of their elaborate party arrangements and controlled access with a silly password (one fish, two fish, red fish). Before long, Sims had an impressive Rolodex of powerful contacts. He also had a line around the block (literally) of celebrities, athletes, and executives clamoring for access to the once-in-a-lifetime memories that he could provide. And so Bluefish was born.

Relocating to the United States in 2000, Sims grew his business rapidly and developed an exclusive reputation, particularly from Bluefish's involvement with tony events like New York Fashion Week, various award shows, and more. The company now has offices around the world and has been featured in *Forbes*, the *Wall Street Journal*, on CNBC, and much more. In the past year, Sims has delivered speeches at the Pentagon and at Harvard (twice!)



MARKET ANALYSIS

This will be the first ever book about the concept of the bucket list, a phrase from popular culture that has near universal recognition and appeal. Simply put, almost *everyone* has dreams of joyful adventures and experiences - particularly childhood fantasies - that they hope to make a reality before they die. The concept of a bucket list touches a deep nerve with both the individual and the greater public consciousness.

And no one understand this intense longing better than Sims. After all, there is no one else out there who does what he does. Not to mention, no one who looks like he does (i.e., straight out of central casting, a shoo-in for a reality TV producer to make a show out of his life). And what he has learned from his unique vantage point is that, **even if you are not literally trying to achieve your own bucket-list fantasies, you can improve your life and find your true happiness by tapping into the passion and purpose that lies behind the bucket-list concept.**

What emerges in Sims' first book, therefore, is an unusual but very appealing hybrid of self-help and adventure - two of the most historically robust categories in the publishing marketplace.

Sims very much sees his book as appealing to the same broad audience that has devoured a slew of recent bestsellers on the subject of happiness, from Dan Harris' *10% Happier* to Gretchen Rubin's *The Happiness Project* to Daniel Gilbert's *Stumbling on Happiness*. But the armchair adventure element of the book - not to mention the author's macho appearance/demeanor - also makes it a prime candidates for readers of epic narrative nonfiction (e.g., Krakauer, Grann, Larson, etc.)

PROMOTION

Sims is a veteran when it comes to publicity, having done interviews and promoted his company everywhere from CNBC to “The Robb Report,” from *Forbes* to the *Wall Street Journal*, and around the world - from London’s *Sunday Times* to the *South China Morning Post*, and beyond.

The following is a sampling of print media about the author and his company...

<http://www.thebluefish.com/bluefish-media>

The following is a sampling of video... <http://thebluefish.com/videos/>

Sims is full of humor and personality, and he shines in interviews, as seen in this exchange on HuffingtonPost Live...

<http://live.huffingtonpost.com/r/segment/how-the-rich-spend/514b6c272b8c2a7e5b0000fe>

In promoting the book, he will also make use of all the extraordinary video footage he has of him making his clients’ dreams come true, from singing with Journey

(<http://www.thebluefish.com/dan-fitzpatrick-sings-with-journey-thanks-to-bluefish>) to visiting the sunken Titanic (<http://www.thebluefish.com/visit-the-titanic>)

It can not be overemphasized that **Sims knows everybody, from Pope Francis to Richard Branson to Donald Trump to Elon Musk. He will draw upon his to-die-for Rolodex to ask for favors - everything from advance blurbs to tweets to interviews - to drive pre-sales and ultimately do everything in his power to make the book a bestseller.**

Sims’ marketing plan for the book involves three fundamental principles. The first of these three may sound obvious but it is what makes the others possible. It is:

1.) Write a Great Book

All effective marketing in the 21st century boils down to creating word of mouth, and that always begins with giving people something awesome to talk about. This means one thing:

The most crucial aspect of marketing is writing an amazing book, and Steve will do that.

There is no one more qualified, likeable, and capable to write a book that delivers on the promises made in this proposal.

2.) Spend Money Where It Counts

There are many areas of the marketing plan where spending will net a positive ROI. Steve plans to hammer those channels with a lot of money to reap as much benefit as possible from them. Furthermore, he plans to spend at least 50% of the advance on marketing, if not more (but of course, only in the places where it makes sense).

3.) Marketing Begins Now and Permeates All Levels

It's no longer good enough to write an amazing book and have money at the ready to market it. That marketing must be executed in an engaging, efficient way that hooks readers and generates massive word of mouth. Steve not only knows how to do that, but he has already baked the marketing into every level of this book, from conception to execution. There are four basic pillars to his marketing efforts:

Pillar 1: Create and leverage his email list

By virtue of his business and personal efforts, Steve has **almost 130K subscribers** on his BLUEnews newsletter to seed his already existing platform in service of marketing the book.

This list will function to:

1. Build the mailing list for promoting (which, in turn, will drive book sales on launch)
2. Provide a sandbox to test content for the book as we're writing and revising it
3. Get extended attention for from Steve's existing fan base and contacts in the entertainment and media industries
4. Build relationships with other related sites that Steve can leverage to promote upon release
5. Develop ancillary material that Steve can use to promote the book through affiliates and other direct sales channels.

Pillar 2: Make extensive use of personal network connections to sell books

Steve's business relies on his incredibly vast and diverse network of people in lofty positions across all industries and fields. It's the entire reason his business exists and his clients work with him: he knows how to deliver on a dream, no matter how outlandish it may seem at the get go.

By working with people in his personal network that have massive email lists, social media reach, or mainstream presence, Steve will be able to *directly reach* 5-10x as many people as he would by just using his own assets.

Pillar 3: Do speaking engagements and events

With the success of Bluefish having been covered in mainstream media more in recent years, Steve's speaking career is starting to take off. Here is a list of events that Steve has spoken at just in the past year:

- Mastermind Talks
- Entrepreneur Society San Francisco
- The Pentagon

This is just the beginning. He already has five more speaking engagements of this caliber lined up for 2016 already, with more to come, e.g. he's going to be keynoting at Genius Networking Events in the coming month, a stage that speakers like Tony Robbins and Tim Ferriss regularly inhabit.

The book's message is directly tied into the topic of Steve's speaking engagements, making them the perfect opportunity to sell copies of the book.

Pillar 4: Do mainstream PR

Of course, Steve plans to work very hard to get mainstream media coverage. He intends to hire at least one book specific PR agency (at a cost of around 15k), and possibly another broader PR agency (at a cost of over 20K). We think this book has many hooks that will be very interesting to the mainstream media.

But, we do not want to overpromise on PR. This is for two reasons:

1. We think that in the current publishing environment, at least early in a book's life-cycle, mainstream media coverage does not result in many actual book sales (at least compared to the other marketing tactics listed above).

2. It's impossible to predict what the mainstream media will cover, or what competing stories will pop up around the time of a book launch, so basing a marketing plan on that coverage is foolish and negligent.

We believe if we manage the first three pillars of our marketing plan properly, then the fourth pillar — mainstream media coverage — will come as a consequence of the success of the others and the PR team's efforts.

Also of note: many of the people who are friends and clients of Steve and his company include many journalists, editors, broadcasters, and producers.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

There has never been a book about the bucket list. But the following two self-help books, both written by men, share a number of the same themes and ideas:

- 1.) *10% Harrier* by Dan Harris (HarperCollins, 2014) - this #1 bestseller shows without a doubt that there is a deep audience for self-help books by male authors, and with a wide male readership - who may not typically purchase titles in this category but who can relate to a voice like Sims or Harris. In the case of the latter, the author was skeptical of the whole self-help world until he had an anxiety attack and decided to delve into meditation, etc., and see what it was all about.
- 2.) *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow (Hyperion, 2008) - the core message of this extraordinary bestselling book by a professor with a terminal illness is that the key to happiness is not fulfilling your adult dreams but rather your childhood ones, the ones that may seem silly or frivolous but are in fact anything but. This idea is absolutely in the same spirit as Sims' thinking about bucket lists and the underlying philosophy that informs his book.

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CHAPTER ABSTRACTS

Introduction

- Opens with personal story of how an Irish/British lad from a construction firm outside of London wound up flying around the world, meeting interesting and successful people
- Introduces his job of making people's dreams and impossible adventures come true
- Segues into promise of book, that he will share with you the secrets that have allowed him to achieve the seemingly impossible for his clients, and that have earned him the reputation as a real life Wizard of Oz
- Broadens discussion to bigger theme of book, of finding your happiness through childlike adventure
- Shows how this childlike curiosity and hunger are often qualities of entrepreneurs like himself and his clients, but also true of everyone

Chapter One: *The Bucket List*

- Introduces and defines the concept of the bucket list, and puts it in the context of our popular culture
- Introduces the bucket list as it applies to author's clients, and to his job as helping them accomplish their bucket-list desires
- Connects the concept of a bucket list to a deeper search for meaning and happiness (bucket lists are not usually about making lots of money or achieving financial goals, more often they're about unique passions that could be perceived as silly or trivial but are in fact anything but)

Chapter Two: *The Secret Is Simplicity*

- Returns to the book's promise of giving readers the tips and techniques to replicate Steve's amazing results for themselves, to unlock the doors to living out their bucket-list fantasies

- But also points to the somewhat sobering truth that his secrets are not really so secret or mysterious at all, they're not magic, they're simple and common-sense
- Emphasizing simplicity as the fundamental guiding principle behind everything he does; far from some complex formula his secrets more often than not boil down to simple human connection and communication

Chapter Three: *Good Old-Fashioned Communication*

- Opens with story of guy who got married in Vatican, and how Steve made that happen, made the connection, and won the trust of this individual, through a very simple and old fashioned method of communication: a humble present sent to him directly along with a handwritten note
- Segues from story into lesson about communication: Especially in our high-tech times, the way to really stand out from the pack is to go “primitive” (postcards, notes, etc.)
- Offers specific techniques to bypass assistants, to make an impression, etc.
- Connects to the times we live in: with so much technology and so many different ways to communicate, something has been lost

Chapter Four: *Perfect Imperfection*

- Opens with story of how Steve made the impossible happen, was able to connect with and disarm someone (in this case, Elon Musk) by reaching out to them in an imperfect, even ugly, but very human way
- Segues into lesson that things that are shiny and perfect are often not as much of a draw as things that are gloriously, beautifully raw and imperfect
- Offers examples in our culture ranging from Amy Winehouse to *The Blair Witch Project* to the work of Picasso
- Provides specific techniques for making the impossible happen, unlocking the doors to your bucket-list fantasies, by embracing the imperfect and ugly (e.g., using short video messages and being very real and casual, in contrast to the more common buttoned-up, “perfect” presentation)

Chapter Five: *You Can't Say No to Passion*

- Opens with story of one client's passion - for Italian food and culture - and how Steve got swept up in it himself and ended up giving the guy a once-in-a-lifetime experience of eating the ultimate meal literally at the feet of Michelangelo's David statue
- Segues into lesson about passion: When you're armed with this secret weapon, it is almost impossible to *not* achieve your goals or bring your bucket-list fantasies to fruition
- Points to fundamental truth about passion, that it is viral, it gets other people's senses tingling; nothing is more integral to influencing others and opening up new, seemingly impossible opportunities
- Offers specific techniques for spreading your passion and for communicating your passionate bucket-list desires in a way that makes it impossible for others to say no
- Supports this idea with story of how the Michelangelo event came together: Steve recognized what lit up his client, and it got Steve's own juices flowing - and eventually everyone involved in the process got caught up in the dream as well

Chapter Six: *Passion Knows No Limits*

- Opens with story of client whose particular object of desire - a rare strain of orchid - was unique to him and not widely shared, but whose expression of that passion was something that could be appreciated and understood by all
- Segues to lesson that what matters is not the substance of your peculiar passion or bucket-list fantasy; the expression of the passion will make others fall in love with your object of desire, and open the necessary doors
- Offers specific techniques for showing others where your heartbeat lies no matter how offbeat or irregular
- Ends with a scene of a young child passionate about the drawing she did at school; no matter how rudimentary her artistic skills, her pure excitement makes it impossible to deny

Chapter Seven: *What Is Your Bucket-List Fantasy?*

- Opens with story of client chased by spies in Monaco, sexy vixen by his side, to show that no dream or fantasy is too outrageous
- Asks questions of reader to try to bring forth their true, deepest desires: What did you dream of as a child (being a rockstar, being an astronaut, etc.), who were your heroes, what kind of things fill your daydreams now?
- Returns to concept of bucket list to challenge the underlying assumptions: Instead of waiting until you're old and then desperately, methodically crossing items off of a list, why not make a change now and lead the kind of life you really want?

Chapter Eight: *What Matters In Life*

- Returns to story of client who got married by Pope in Vatican, a perfect example of a bucket-list fantasy that may seem over-the-top but is in fact reflective of what truly matters to him in his life: his marriage, his faith
- Reflects on everything author has learned from his unusual career, the people he has met, and the adventures he has shared with them - as well as his own life trajectory, as a husband, father, and more
- Concludes that money can't buy you happiness

Conclusion

- Restates overall premise of book, that you *can* achieve the impossible and make your bucket-list fantasies a reality, in the same way that Steve does for his clients
- Ends with an inspiring send-off and call to action

SAMPLE CHAPTER

Chapter Three: Good Old-Fashioned Communication

Well, there's nothing here that says it CAN'T be done, I thought to myself, as I perused through the rules and regulations, FAQ, and more on the Vatican website. I was doing my preliminary research for a new client who wanted to get married there. Yes, married *in* the Vatican.

Now bear in mind, it is not altogether uncommon for Americans to marry in Rome, which is an enchanting European city in itself. But this fellow wanted something different: he wanted to say his vows literally within the tiny walled enclave that is the home of the papacy. Sure. Why not? In fact, why stop there? This guy wanted to get married *by the Pope*. And he wanted me to make it all happen. If Jesus could turn water into wine...

So what did I do? I started to investigate. I couldn't find any language explicitly barring such an event from occurring. But neither could I find any definite leads or links, anyone to talk to or communicate with. I came across some names but no phone numbers or emails. Needless to say, this was par for the course in my line of work. When you are trying to achieve the impossible, no one's going to lay out the red carpet and make it easy for you. You have to rely on your own wits.

My wits - and maybe some good luck - was all that had gotten me to this point, traveling to Italy and all over the world. But the more I saw and experienced of the glamorous life, the more I realized that perhaps my success had not been in spite of my humble upbringing but rather related to it. Like me, many of my wealthy clients were self-made entrepreneurs. They weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouth. With these folks, I found that I instinctively "got" where they were coming from and what made them tick. They came to me with the same childlike curiosity and hunger for knowledge that drove them as innovators and business people.

Their requests were usually very specific, and often rather outlandish, but there was more to these fantasies than meets the eye. There is something deeper behind these bucket-list items. Which is what makes the very concept of a bucket list so interesting to me. Yes, these clients are looking for adventure. Sometimes it is an epic adventure filled with action and physicality. But just as often, as in the case of the Vatican client, the adventure is more spiritual than physical. What they want above all is an experience so memorable, so unbelievable in its scope and audacity, that it feels like a dream.

And in the same way that our dreams are ripe for interpretation and analysis, our bucket lists tell us a great deal about who we are and what really matters to us in life. I have spent many years, decades now, helping people make their dreams come true and achieve their bucket-list fantasies. But in doing so, I have also seen men and women come to greater truths about themselves. This is the magic of the bucket list. And it is what drives me to write this book: my belief that the same simple techniques I use to help open doors for my clients can help everyone open those doors, literally and figuratively, for themselves.

By learning to communicate like I do, and particularly with the work I do at Bluefish, you can break down the barriers and see your passion spread and multiply. Passion is the elixir of life. When you twist off the lid and let it flow freely, you become open to the world and to the passions of others. The currents flow both ways. You vibe off other people and they vibe off you. You communicate your passion to the world and in doing so, ultimately, you find opportunities and happiness you never imagined.

The handwritten note

Does the Pope use email? What about Twitter? You may think, and you're probably right, that things are a little more old-fashioned within the the ecclesiastical city-state. But regardless of where you are and who you're trying to communicate with to achieve *your* dream, the same

principle applies: if you want to really stand out from the pack, especially in our high-tech times, the way to do so is to go “primitive.”

What do I mean by primitive? Think of it like this... when was the last time you received an actual postcard? A handwritten card from your friend who’s spending the summer in Hawaii or your sister who’s on honeymoon in Australia. Do you remember how it made you feel, to open up your mailbox and see it there among all the bills and junk, a piece of mail that you were actually excited to pull out and read?

A handwritten note is special. In a fast-paced world that can often feel cold and anonymous, it is a sliver of humanity. Every man and woman has a different style of penmanship. Every person’s writing, therefore, is unique - like a snowflake or a fingerprint. The very act of putting pen to paper, and having someone else read those words, in ink that was manipulated by your hand, carries a surprising intimacy. And this intimacy is almost electric. A handwritten note *makes* you pay attention. Of course, the connection is fleeting. The person reading may still toss it. But they will give it a chance, if only for a moment. That is the difference that a handwritten note will make.

In the case of the client who wanted to get married at the Vatican, my first step was to go down to the local store, get a bunch of cards, and write notes to the various individuals whose names I had found online. There were about ten in all. I didn’t know who was the perfect person to target, the one who could open the door for me. So I hedged my bets and sent ten letters in the hope that one of them would lead to something.

The value of informality

Writing a note by hand, of course, isn't everything. What do you *say* in the note? There are endless options and approaches. Do you make your request right then and there? Do you lay all your proverbial cards on the table? Do you keep it short? Do you try to flatter the recipient?

This is what I wrote: *I wanted to reach out because I have a client and close friend who has an amazing desire to say his vows inside the Vatican. Who do I need to speak to to make this dream happen?? Please please please, call or email me at ... "*

Then I signed off with, "*Have a blessed day, Steve*"

Notice that although I was courteous, I wasn't overly polite in a formal way. I kept it conversational and I tried to sound like a real human being, not some Hallmark boilerplate. The personal, human touch of my words matched the imperfect scribble of my pen.

Notice too that I referred to my client as a friend, and didn't use the word "customer." The daily grind of life is filled with exchanges that are rote and transactional. And when it comes to work, to the arena of business and commerce and so forth, these sorts of transactions can sometimes seem like all there is. When many of us go to "work," we turn off a whole side of ourselves. We don't allow for, or anticipate, any sort of true human connection to slip through the cracks and into these work tasks.

Which is why a handwritten note with a human touch can be so effective in breaking the pattern. It's almost like an unexpected kiss. Granted, for some people, the walls they have built around themselves are too high and the kiss isn't going to get through no matter what. But remember, one person is all it takes. If you can reach the right individual and disarm them with your humanity, you can then take the next step of channeling the passion rushing through your own veins directly *into* the bloodstream of that other person.

It only takes one. And that's exactly what I got. Out of the ten handwritten notes I sent, nine of them went nowhere. But one led to an email response. That one was all I needed.

Video messaging

Once I got that email, what do you think I did? You might be surprised, especially given my penchant for primitive communication, that my next move was... wait for it... a video message. Video? Isn't that what millennials (and younger) do? Yes, but in its own way, it is primitive. It's a reaction to the impersonal nature of email and even text messages, and almost a return to the oral tradition of our ancestors. Humans are by our nature a visual people. We respond to images, especially to faces, more so than we do the written word.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Well, in that case, a moving picture or video must be worth a million. And as a practical matter, when it comes to getting through to someone you don't know and winning their trust, there is just nothing that compares to seeing a human face on the other end of their screen, flesh and blood and with all the quirks (accents, gestures, mannerisms) that combine within each of us to make us unique.

Now, look, I know mine's not the handsomest mug in the land - I still often refer to myself as an ugly kid from the outskirts of London - but when it comes to sending an effective video message, what counts is authenticity. You want to look that person in the eye and be yourself. Of course, you still want to be polite. There's a difference between casual/conversational and overly familiar. This isn't your drinking buddy from the pub. You don't know what they're like or what turns them on or off. So err on the side of a communication style that is generally pleasing to most people, but still true to who you are.

If you can do that, if you can be polite and respectful but still show your humor and personality, you're ahead of the game. But there are a few specific items that are important to remember, in your video messages and all your communication.

Sidebar

Steve's Dos and Don'ts

[note that these Dos and Don'ts sidebars will crop up in each chapter]

DO show your appreciation very quickly. In my video to the representative of the Vatican, I made sure to say something to the effect of "This may not go anywhere but whatever happens I just want to say thank you so much for your consideration, for taking the time..."

DON'T ask a question that can be answered with a yes or no. As soon as you make your request explicit, you force a decision, a decision that may not go your way. Better to draw out the conversation, and the relationship, as long as possible. The longer, the better your odds.

End sidebar

Above all, politeness and expression of gratitude are some of the sharpest weapons in your arsenal. And with video their power is greatly amplified. Then again, to even think about them in that way, as rhetorical tools or tricks, is to miss the point. This is about being human. It's not about a means to an end. Extraordinary things can and will happen when you put yourself out into the world in this way. But what you learn about yourself, over the course of your journey, is a valuable as what you get from others.

A simple gift

Imagine a world where *everyone* went the extra mile, added a personal touch, etc. It doesn't take much. But it makes all the difference. After I sent the video message, I did what I often do, which is send a small gift, just a gesture really, in this case an inexpensive (\$5) bag of coffee. Who wouldn't be happy to receive a bag of java? It's so ordinary that it's unexpected. When has someone ever sent you a bag of coffee in the mail? It's practical, it's everyday, but it's also enjoyable. Indulgent, even. (A package of toilet-paper rolls is practical but it's not a good present. There's a difference.)

I sent the coffee myself, in a brown paper bag. Why a paper bag? For one thing, I didn't want it to look too prepared, or clinically perfect. I didn't want it to seem like something gift-wrapped at Nordstroms. But more specifically, I have learned from experience that **gift-wrapped packages go through assistants whereas packages that look like they're from a close friend or family member go straight to the individual.** Why is that? Handlers and assistants will see the brown paper bag and assume it's something private that they might get in trouble for if they opened it without permission.

Sneaky? Maybe a little bit. But ironically it's equally important down the road that you get the handlers on your side and maybe even send them presents too. Taking care of the family, I call it. In a way, these people are even more important than the person you're trying to reach, because they are the gatekeepers. Assistants are sensitive, rightfully so, about disrespect. If they perceive you as dismissive toward them - or worse, if you piss them off - you might as well forget about gaining access to the person they report to. Again, it doesn't take much to endear yourself. But make sure to always show your appreciation. To them and to everyone.

In that same spirit of appreciation, when I sent the bag of coffee, again I included a handwritten note. This time all I said was "I realize we're still in the early stages of making this happen, but I just wanted to show my gratitude." Not overly formal, just simple, and from the heart. Not fawning or obsequious, just showing a level of decency that's one step above the way most of us experience the fabric of daily life. Especially in today's fast-paced, high-tech world where people can hardly be bothered to even spell out the word "you."

When you communicate in this way - through old-fashioned, time-tested, *mensch*-like connection - not only do you stand out from the pack and draw others to you, but you open the

door of your own heart and soul to a new world of possibilities. In the case of my client, not only did he succeed in bringing to fruition this unique desire which was so meaningful to him and his beautiful fiancée - to say their vows in the holiest place on earth, as dictated by their faith, and standing in front of the worldwide leader of their Church - but the memory of a lifetime didn't end there. From Rome they traveled to Venice. I arranged a private dinner for two over the canals of the iconic island city, where the couple was serenaded by Toni Braxton. And then on to Florence to be treated to a private performance by Andrea Bocelli.

But those, my friends, are stories for another day...