

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/know-what-you-want-and-set-objectives>

OptiMedica CEO Mark Forchette recounts a chance encounter with Ray Kroc, the legendary leader of McDonald's. While working a summer job between high school and college, Forchette had the opportunity to have a one on one conversation with Kroc, a conversation that left Forchette with the lasting reminder to set big objectives in life.



Transcript

My year between my senior year high school and my first year college and I was a desk clerk in the summertime at the Howard Johnson's Hotel on the interstate.. Now, I kind of like that job as a kid because you got to wear coat and tie for this, kind of cool.. No, it's not.. But I was a desk clerk in the Howard Johnson's and one summer night, car pulls up in front and this well-dressed gentleman walks out and walks in and I asked him to sign in.. I put the card in front of, and then he reaches out and picks up a pen and wrote his name and he wrote Ray Kroc and I stopped.. I put my hand down.. I said, "Not the Ray Kroc that found the McDonald's." As 18 years old, it's funny some bizarre coincide just like read an article like three days before about him or I probably wouldn't have known who he was and he said, "Yeah, that's me." And man, I couldn't believe it and I thought what an opportunity to talk to him.. So I just hammered him with questions and so he said, "You know what, I'll tell you what I'm going to go put my stuff down and I'll come back and I'll sit down and talk to you." Yeah, right.. So, but he did.. He put his stuff down, he came back and walked in the lobby, sat down and talked to me..

And I remember this remarkable conversation and when he walked out of the door that evening, I remember thinking, "Man, I want to do what that guy does.. I want to be a CEO.. I want to create a culture.. I want to create a company." And it had this huge impact on me.. And so, the rest of my life in my work career, every day I'm making decisions.. I'm thinking I want to do that.. So lesson number one, know what you want, set your objectives.. I promise, you'll achieve it.. I promise...