

About the Author

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LEARN THE HARD WAY: MAKING IT IN THE REAL WORLD



Warm and insightful, J.R. Parrish has spent his life redefining possibilities for himself and others. His childhood was as humble as it was challenging. At 2 years old, his mother abandoned him. Raised by his paternal grandmother until her death when he was 12, and then by his dad, a career military man, and step-mom, J.R. Parrish's life could have turned out much differently. While many kids would have withered or rebelled under such circumstances, Parrish faced each new hurdle with dignity and aplomb, his spirit strengthened by what many others could not have endured.

By the time he was a young man, J.R. Parrish knew that he wanted to succeed, he just didn't know how. Enter a man named Glenn Lay, a human relations specialist who would become his mentor and guide. Parrish went from a job as a milkman to becoming one of the top salesmen for a Fortune 500 Company and then Xerox Corporation, before founding his own commercial real estate firm in Silicon Valley.

For 25 years, Parrish built his company on the premise that honor, honesty and treating people with fairness were the bedrock of any thriving enterprise. As a result, J.R. Parrish Inc., grew to become one of the largest commercial real estate brokerage in all of Silicon Valley. In 1999, Parrish sold it, retired, bought a coffee plantation on The Big Island in Hawaii and moved there with his wife, Lisa.

With his newfound freedom from the daily grind of running a multimillion-dollar business, J.R. Parrish embraced his next ambition—making a difference in the lives of kids. To that end, he decided to consolidate the wisdom he had accumulated along the way into a book for teens and young adults, something he wished would have been available to him before starting out.

His first book, titled *If I'd Known Then What I Know Now*, was published in 2003. To date, it has sold thousands of copies and continues to impact the futures of its many readers. Since its release, Parrish has penned yet another book for adolescent audiences. *You Don't Have to Learn the Hard Way: Making It in the Real World, A Guide for Graduates*, synthesizes a life's worth of well-earned knowledge into one engaging volume, addressing everything from how to nail that first big job interview, avoid relationship mistakes and make sound financial decisions to how to be a good listener, learn the art of relating well with others and achieve personal and professional fulfillment.

To coincide with the book's publication, author J.R. Parrish is sponsoring a nationwide essay competition in which an adult will be awarded a \$10,000 college scholarship for the young person of his or her choice.

