

Michael Houlihan & Bonnie Harvey

Founders of Barefoot Wines

Please contact a GDA agent for information.

Topics

- Branding / Marketing
- Business
- Business Growth / Strategy / Trends
- Change Management / Organizational Change
- Customer Relations
- Employee Engagement
- Entrepreneur
- Innovation / Creativity
- Inspiration / Achievement

About Michael Houlihan & Bonnie Harvey

As founders of the iconic Barefoot Wine brand (eventually acquired by E&J Gallo), Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey are two of the most highly sought-after keynote speakers and interview guests on business and executive topics. The two routinely appear on radio, podcasts and television outlets including ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox, and Bloomberg; and are frequently quoted and interviewed on [professional and national publications](#) including Forbes, Entrepreneur, The Huffington Post, AMEX Open Forum, and Costco Connection. Their bi-monthly business articles are published by The Business Journals in 43 cities nationwide. Michael & Bonnie speak internationally for corporations, conferences, universities and symposiums including SOCAP (Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals in Business), The World Conference on Entrepreneurship (ICSB) in Dublin, Ireland, The Conference Board's Consumer Experience Symposium in NYC, The C-Suite Conferences, Persistent Systems, Liberty Tax, Retail Packaging Association, Renaissance Executive Forums, and over 60 universities that teach entrepreneurship.

Audiences worldwide attend Michael and Bonnie's speeches to hear about their incredible journey as entrepreneurs and to learn about their unique "*Barefoot Spirit*" sales-driven culture and approach, which helped to establish the Barefoot brand as one of the most recognizable wine brands globally. Most recently, Michael and Bonnie have further adapted their teachings and launched the "*Barefoot Startup*" (#barefootstartup) movement, which encourages lean, early stage startups to adopt key bootstrapping tenets and sales-driven principles and tactics. Today, their timeless *Barefoot* business principles and proven strategies are utilized by both startups and large enterprises. Michael & Bonnie are [highly recommended](#) by business leaders and professors of entrepreneurship as inspirational speakers and entrepreneurial thought leaders.

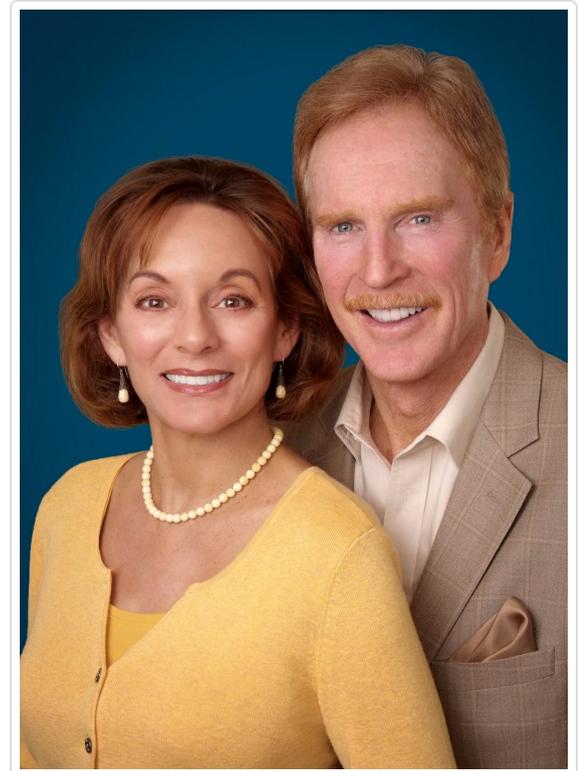
Michael & Bonnie previously co-authored the New York Times bestselling business book, [The Barefoot Spirit: How Hardship, Hustle, and Heart Built Americas #1 Wine Brand](#), which is recommended reading for the CEO Library in CEO Forum, chronicles their humble beginnings in a laundry room in 1986 to their creation of an international bestselling wine brand. With virtually no money and no wine industry experience, they employed innovative ideas and strategic alliances to overcome obstacles and create new markets. They pioneered Worthy Cause Marketing and performance-based compensation, and took a comprehensive view of customer service. Their latest book, [The Entrepreneurial Culture, 23 Ways to Engage and Empower Your People](#), was featured in Jeff Hayzlett's C-Suite TV Network launch and The C-Suite Book Club.

Select Keynotes

- **Branding, Marketing and Innovation (Barefoot is a Top Global Brand)**

Look at branding from all sides and the different ways it will be used, viewed and maybe, booed! Whatever is missing will stick out like a sore thumb and will open the door for a competitor with a more comprehensive approach to the market. It takes true leadership to insist on authenticity. Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey impart the essentials of branding and marketing, including the technique they pioneered called Worthy Cause Marketing to create strategic partnerships with nonprofits, without paying a dime in advertising.

Turning the pyramid structure upside down by having a two-division company of sales and sales support. Having customer service and sales inform all the other departments and promote true innovation in the company culture through permission, acknowledgement and building success on the backs of mistakes.



• **Going Global (Rise to the Challenges of International Business)**

As our world gets smaller, more and more entrepreneurs are going global. But just what does that mean in terms of entrepreneurship? Sure, it seems easy enough when marketing through e-commerce. It's almost a given that entrepreneurs will be selling internationally as the Internet is boundless. But what about selling a real product with dimensions and weight in international commerce? Michael and Bonnie discuss the top 5 challenges of going global, and boots-on-the-ground tactical information on how to overcome them:

1. Compliance: Foreign agents, licenses, agencies, labeling, metric weights, measures and trademarks
2. Shipment: Freight forwarders, ocean-going freight, container sizes, pricing, and product temperature
3. Receivables: Extending credit and risks, Letter of Credit, escrow accounts, recommended documents
4. Duties and Dollars: Crucial timing of duties; taxes, tariffs, exchange rates and stable pricing
5. Brokers: International brokers and exclusive rights to foreign markets; retail outlets and sales reps

• **How to Engage and Empower Your People with the Two-Division Company**

What happens when you fit every employee in your company into one of two divisions: sales or sales support? Suddenly, everyone knows his or her "real" job is to create customer and coworker experiences that drive sales. This shift in perception will drive every decision your employees make. Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey built the iconic Barefoot Wine (a top global brand) using this simple business structure. In this presentation, they'll reveal their secrets, including:

1. Why a sales-focused culture produces the kind of results that foster and sustain customer loyalty
2. How to look for the entrepreneurial spirit in every applicant
3. How to orient all new employees toward sales on day one
4. How to enforce the sales support relationship with sales through:
 - Performance-based compensation
 - "Know-the-need," not "need-to-know"
 - Leader/employee relationships based on permission, acknowledgment, and validation

Michael and Bonnie attribute their success to their people, who came up with innovative, effective, and disruptive solutions—solutions enabled by Barefoot's "sales-positive" culture.

All of these lessons are conveyed through their own entertaining, real-life stories and proven strategies that will engage and empower your audience. Attendees will walk away with practical, workable tools they can start using immediately.

• **How to Get the Most Out of Your Money!**

Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey started Barefoot, a top global brand, in their laundry room with no money and no industry knowledge. They now share their tried-and-true formulas to reduce your need for capital and engage allies to get the most bang for your buck!

YOU WILL LEARN HOW TO:

- DISCOVER AND MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR HIDDEN ASSETS
- IDENTIFY AND WORK WITH YOUR STRATEGIC ALLIES
- USE YOUR SUPPLIERS AND BUYERS AS BANKERS
- DRIVE RESULTS WITH PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION
- OUTSOURCE TO REDUCE YOUR COSTS AND INCREASE YOUR QUALITY
- PREVENT TURNOVER (THE #1 HIDDEN COST OF ANY BUSINESS)
- GET THE WORD OUT AND GAIN LOYAL CUSTOMERS WITHOUT COSTLY ADVERTISING

• **How to Motivate People to Produce Results**

A company is only as strong as its relationships. Think about it. You rely on consumers, clients, staff, contractors, vendors, suppliers, bankers, and distributors (just to name a few!) to take actions that keep your business humming along and making money. Imagine what would happen to your performance if instead of doing enough to get by, these key players really turned on their work ethics and innovative abilities?

You can't force, threaten, bribe, or cajole anyone into working and thinking on a higher level. What you can do is generate the same spirit that fueled the iconic, top-selling Barefoot brand to engage and inspire people to produce amazing results. The brand's founders, Michael Houlihan

and Bonnie Harvey, can teach you how:

STEP 1: Identify and appreciate each participant for their function in the larger framework of your own goals.

STEP 2: Seek to understand and respect the objectives of every participant.

STEP 3: Demonstrate that you have their best interests at heart.

STEP 4: Achieve your goals by helping them achieve theirs.

Michael and Bonnie use entertaining and memorable stories from their real-life experiences building the world-famous Barefoot Wine brand. They reveal how they knocked down overwhelming obstacles by putting themselves in the other person's shoes and thinking creatively about how to help them succeed, being the ultimate assistant buyer in every relationship, over-delivering and exceeding customer expectations, and more.

Audiences will learn how to engage and empower every business relationship to forge dynamic strategic alliances and partnerships. They'll take away innovative tactics they can immediately employ to achieve results with clients and staff, distributors and suppliers, jobbers and middlemen, retailers and clerks, and the community and the general public.

Barefoot beat the odds in a heavily controlled, competitive industry to become a top global brand. You can follow in their (sandy) footprints. The secrets Michael and Bonnie share apply to industries across the board. By infusing your company with its own version of the Barefoot Spirit, you're making the kind of high-impact changes that supercharge motivation and get incredible results quickly.

- **The Barefoot Story (From the Laundry Room to the Board Room)**

It is hard to believe that such an iconic brand as Barefoot Wines began in a laundry room of a rented farmhouse in the Sonoma County hills. Even more surprising is that the people who started it, Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey, had no money and no real knowledge about the wine industry.

They successfully sold the brand to E&J Gallo, and Barefoot is a top global brand.

Michael and Bonnie discuss the massively complicated industry they embarked on, and setbacks they regularly encountered along employing innovative ideas to overcome obstacles, creating new markets and strategic alliances, while pioneering Worthy Cause Marketing and performance-based compensation.

Those hardships, that hustle, and their heart, are the essence of the Barefoot Spirit. They discuss the cornerstone business and lifestyle philosophies that made it, ultimately, an enduring success and are applicable to any business. Presentation complimented by purchased copies of their New York Times bestseller, *The Barefoot Spirit*.

- **The Entrepreneurial Culture**

If any business is to thrive in the global marketplace, its employees must think like owners. Problem is, few employees know how. The job of company leaders is to train them to think this way. Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey know how to create the conditions that draw out and nourish people's inner entrepreneurs. They take the principles that empowered their own tribe of productive, creative and loyal employees to beat the odds; and boil those principles down into poignant lessons business owners can put into practice right away to boost the bottom line:

- How to remove roadblocks to the entrepreneurial spirit
- Why everyone at your company must ask questions (including you)
- Why your people should embrace mistakes
- How to find and hire people with entrepreneurial DNA
- How to foster innovation by getting out of your people's way
- How to drive results with performance-based compensation
- How to increase well-being in your people with acknowledgement and permission
- How to prevent turnover (the #1 hidden cost of any business)

They take everything they know about the spirit of entrepreneurship and help startups, leaders and corporations infuse it into their company cultures to engage and empower their employees.

- **Worthy Cause Marketing (Social Reasons for Customer Loyalty)**

Michael Houlihan and Bonnie Harvey discuss the fundamentals of a strategy they pioneered called Worthy Cause Marketing that enabled their

brand to stand for more than its mercantile value and help numerous nonprofit causes at the same time. It not only gave their employees a sense of pride that they were making the world a better place; it gave the membership of those non-profits a compelling social reason to choose their product and spread the word. This ingenious method didn't cost a dime in paid commercial advertising, and built the Barefoot brand state by state and country by country to the iconic status it holds today. It worked so well, that even when they had the money for paid conventional advertising, they continued with Worthy Cause Marketing while helping causes like conservation, human rights and clean oceans and beaches.

Select Book Titles

- **2019:** AUDIOBOOK: The Barefoot Spirit: How Hardship, Hustle, and Heart Built America's #1 Wine Brand
- **2015:** The Entrepreneurial Culture: 23 Ways to Engage and Empower Your People
- **2013:** The Barefoot Spirit: How Hardship, Hustle, and Heart Built America's #1 Wine Brand

Select Articles

- [Get the Word Out With Worthy Cause Marketing](#)
- [Do your Suppliers Like You?](#)
- [Pyramids are for Dead Pharaohs](#)
- [10 Business Lessons Learned From the Founders of America's Biggest Wine Brand](#)
- [Oops, My Bad! 5 Ways Your Business Can Improve by Admitting to Mistakes](#)
- [Oops, My Bad! 5 Ways Your Business Can Improve by Admitting to Mistakes](#)
- [Do You Deserve Success Just Because You Follow a Process?](#)
- [How to Know When it's the Right Time to Quit Your Day Job](#)
- [How the Right 'Spirit' Can Help You Start a Business Without Venture Capital](#)
- [How to Count Down Success](#)
- [How to Make Sure You Hear the Good Ideas That Will Improve Your Company](#)

Select Testimonials

"Bonnie and Michael were easy to work with and over delivered. Our members loved the specific examples and business lessons they wove into their stories."

— *Dr. Frumi Barr, Bay Area Distributors and Manufactures ProVisors Group*

"It was an inspiration to hear Michael Houlihan & Bonnie Harvey's (founders of Barefoot Wines) story of how they broke all the rules to become the country's #1 best selling wine! From the laundry room to the board room, theirs was an inspiring story of determination and perseverance. Their natural story-telling ability blended with a little humor makes for an enjoyable experience. Their obvious love for what they do, caring for employees, and search for continuous improvement is the foundation for their success. Their presentation was very entertaining and shared a powerful message to our members. They enjoyed interacting with them both during the Summit. We appreciate them being there and adding to our Summit success. We were honored to have them as our key note speakers at the 75th Anniversary IdeasAmerica Summit." - Brenda Kelly, President

— *IdeasAmerica*

"Michael and Bonnie brought a true sense of grassroots marketing to our franchisees. The way they developed and structured their success is nothing short of brilliant, built on hard work, passion and a love for giving back. Ingenious marketing tricks at a low cost price tag will make you see how to create a story and buzz around your brand. Fabulous and real, Michael and Bonnie inspire others to win and have fun doing it!" - Martha O'Gorman, Chief Marketing Office, Liberty Tax Service

— *Liberty Tax Service Annual Conference for Franchisees.*

"Your presentation on March 7th was very inspiring and all of us loved it. Even though your experience was from a completely different industry the key observations and learning that you shared were appropriate to our business and everyone could relate to them. Your story came from

the heart and all of us could appreciate the way you built your business starting from scratch. The team really liked the session and we all found it to be very inspiring. It was the best session of the event.” Anand Deshpande, Ph.D., Founder, Managing Director and CEO, Persistent Systems – Delhi, NY, London, Silicon Valley.

– *Persistent Systems*

“Michael & Bonnie were the perfect speakers to help us celebrate our 25th Annual Small Business Week Awards Luncheon. With a room full of small business owners and entrepreneurs in attendance their breakout session and keynote were both informative and inspiring. It was great insight from business owners who have been through it all. Even after the event I’m still receiving compliments from attendees about what great speakers they were.” -Marice Hague, Marketing Director, Florida SBDC at UNF, Jacksonville, FL

– *The 25th Annual Florida Small Business Development Center at the University of North Florida.*

“Thank you for all the valuable lessons you shared. I will use them in my own company.” -Shea Sealy, President and Founder, Advanced Building Care, LLC

– *The C-Suite Network’s Chairman’s Retreat*

“Bonnie and Michael deliver a workshop that illuminates the ground breaking and practical steps they took to build what became one of the biggest wine brands in the world and revolutionized the entire industry globally. As a result, our entrepreneurial CEOs and Founders were able to rethink their business into sales and sales support and how to empower all staff, partners and providers to do the same. It takes a community to raise a child and an empowered team to realize outstanding brand success. Michael and Bonnie bring this message and its practical applications home loud and clear!” -Tricia Benn, General Manager, The Hero Club

– *The Hero Club*

“Our group really enjoyed your presentation. Your insight into the sales process and how to make sure that the team has open lines of communication, so even the receptionist has the ability to positively influence a business, were so refreshing.” –Larry Klobertanz, President, Oregon Executives Association

– *The Oregon Executives Association*

“We’re going to implement the concepts you shared with us in all our marketing pieces and how we approach sales going forward.” -Mike Black, CEO, Mappify.co, and PIE Attendee “Thanks so much for your well received keynote speech this week. I received raves from the attendees. Your humorous approach to teaching how to approach the sales situation and your stories about how your built Barefoot Winery dovetailed extremely well together. I’m looking forward to a number of the companies who attended turning their marketing program around based on your presentation.” -John Van Horn, Editor, Parking Today Host, PIE

– *The Parking Industry Exhibition*