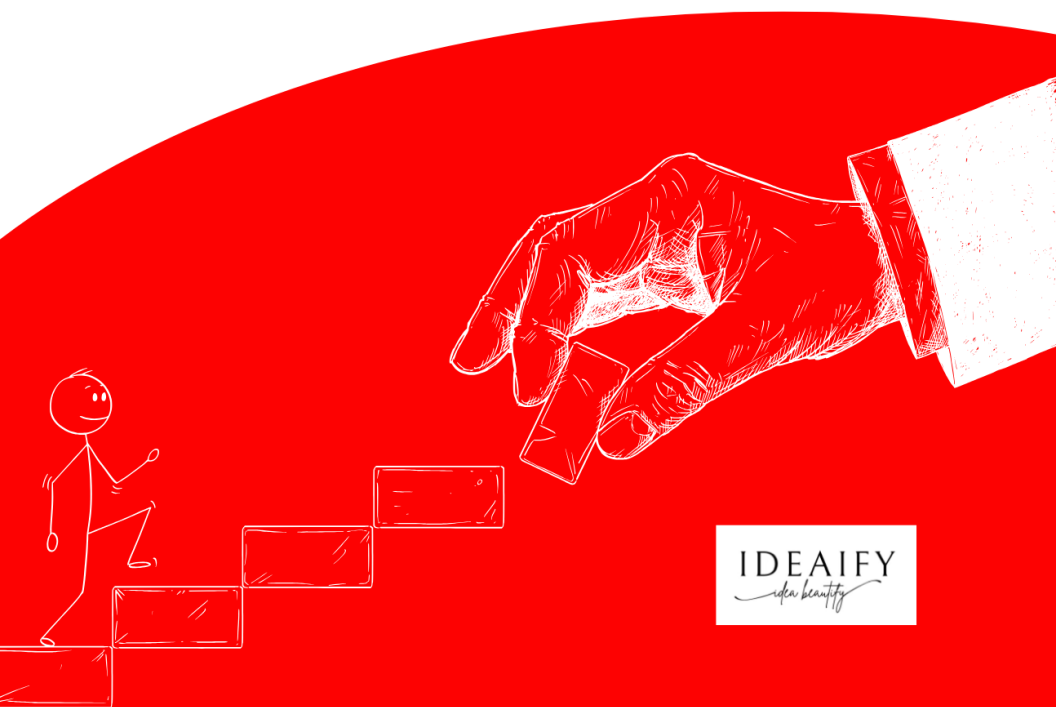


100 Rules According to Ray Kroc

PAVEL HREJSEMNOU



IDEAIFY
idea beauty

100 Rules According to Ray Kroc

How to build an empire that outlives its founder

Pavel Hrejsemnou

Book title: 100 Rules According to Ray Kroc

Subtitle: -

Author: Pavel Hrejsemnou

Publisher: IDEAIFY s.r.o. **Publisher's address:** Na Studních 71, 284 01
Kutná Hora, Czechia **Website:** www.ideaify.cz **E-mail:** info@ideaify.cz

Year of publication: 2025 **Edition:** First electronic edition **Number of pages:**
250 A5

Copyright and legal notices

© 2025 Pavel Hrejsemnou and IDEAIFY s.r.o.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any way or in any form (electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise) without the prior written permission of the author and publisher.

ISBN (PDF verze): 978-80-53028-63-9

ISBN (ePuB verze): 978-80-53028-64-6

Disclaimer: The information contained in this book is intended for educational and informational purposes only. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the content, neither the publisher nor the authors are responsible for any errors or omissions, nor for the results that may result from the use of the information contained herein. The reader should always verify information from multiple sources and adapt it to their specific needs.

Creation and production

Language: English

Graphic design, cover design and typesetting: IDEAIFY s.r.o.

"Persistence. *Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent."* - Ray Kroc

Prologue

From Mixer to Empire: What Ray Kroc Can Still Teach Us Today

When Ray Kroc first saw the small McDonald's restaurant in San Bernardino, California, it wasn't yet a miracle. No golden arches, no millions of daily customers, no franchise revolution. It was just a humble establishment run by two brothers who knew how to quickly prepare a good burger. But Ray saw more in it. He saw a **vision**. And that changed the world.

Ray Kroc wasn't a genius in the traditional sense of the word. He wasn't a young startup visionary or an inventor. When he discovered McDonald's, he was 52 years old and selling milkshake machines. But he had something many others don't: **relentless drive, discipline, the courage to take risks—and the ability to transform an idea into a system.**

This book isn't a biography. Don't look for a chronology or a brand history here. It's a **collection of rules—principles** by which Ray Kroc lived, worked, and built. A hundred ideas that will help you build your own business, foster personal growth, and perhaps... change the way you think about success.

Today, McDonald's has over 40,000 restaurants worldwide. But it all started with the **vision of one man who refused to be average**. This book is a tribute to his philosophy—and also a practical guide for anyone who doesn't just want to survive, but to build something lasting.

Get ready. You've just ordered a large menu of inspiration,
without compromise and without unnecessary fuss.

Come on in. We'll serve you right away.

VISION AND GOALS

1. Have a Clear Vision for the Future – Without Vision, Business is Just a Gamble.

"Without vision, business is just a gamble." (Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc wasn't the first to sell hamburgers. Nor was he the first to invent fast food. But he was the first to see something more in it—a global network of restaurants where customers would receive the same service and the same products, whether they came in Chicago, Tokyo, or Prague. What set Kroc apart from thousands of other entrepreneurs was his **unwavering vision**.

When he first saw the McDonald brothers' restaurant in 1954, he was selling milkshake machines. He could have just sold a few machines and moved on. But he saw the future. He had a vision that was bigger than the current transaction. He saw the potential of a standardized system that could conquer the world. And he pursued it—hard, persistently, often against logic and the opinions of others.

Vision isn't a dream. It's a compass.

In business, just as in life, it's easy to lose direction. Daily operations, unexpected crises, market changes—all of this can divert us from our original intention. That's precisely why a **strong vision is essential**. It's like a compass that guides you in the right direction, even in fog and storms. Without it, you might easily end up somewhere you never wanted to be—or not get anywhere at all.

Ray Kroc said, "If you're not in business to be the best, then why are you there?" The vision he set for himself wasn't just

about the size of the company, but about the **quality, consistency, and distinctiveness of the brand**. It wasn't a dream he simply envisioned; it was a concrete idea of the future that determined his every decision.

What does vision look like today?

In the 21st-century digital world, it might seem that everything changes too quickly to plan ahead. But precisely in a fast-paced world, a **clear vision is what differentiates strong businesses from those that disappear with the first algorithm change**.

Take Elon Musk, for example. When he started Tesla, electric cars were a niche market. But his vision—a fully electric future—was so strong that it attracted investors, talent, and customers. And despite all doubts and obstacles, he is systematically turning it into reality.

Like Kroc, Musk also knows that without vision, an entrepreneur quickly slips into surviving instead of creating.

Practical Exercise:

1. **Name your vision.** Try to describe in one sentence what the goal of your business is in 5 or 10 years. What do you want your company to change? Whom should it serve? What do you want to achieve?
Example: "I want to build a network of cafes with local products that will inspire fair business practices in towns under 20,000 inhabitants."
2. **Create "compass questions":** Write down 3 questions that will help you verify whether every decision you make is moving you towards your vision.
For example: "Will this step help me get closer to the

quality I want?" "Is this consistent with how I want customers to perceive me?"

3. **Share your vision.** Tell your team, partner, mentor. A vision you keep only to yourself is like a map you never unfold.

Questions for Reflection:

- When was the last time you paused and assessed where you're actually headed?
- Does your business have a vision, or does it merely react to daily demands?
- Could your team articulate your vision in their own words?

2. Set Specific, Measurable Goals

"Vague wishes are not goals." (Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc wasn't a man of vague ideas. When he entered the fast-food world, he knew exactly what he wanted to achieve. He didn't say, "I want to be successful" or "I'd like to grow." His goal was **specific**: to build a network of restaurants where every customer received the same product with the same quality—across an entire continent. He was obsessed with **consistency, measurability, and repeatability**.

When Kroc signed the first contracts with franchisees, he already had a detailed manual on how the interior should look, how long fries should be cooked, and what words the staff should use. His goals, though ambitious, were **measurable and translatable into daily practice**.

Vision is inspiration. Goals are the engine.

Vision excites you. But what makes you get up and keep going every day are **goals**. Without them, even the most beautiful vision becomes just a postcard on the wall.

Ray Kroc was a master at translating vision into concrete goals. His vision of a global brand transformed into the goal of "opening an average of 1 restaurant per day," then "capturing every major city in the USA," and later, "expanding into Europe within three years."

Here's what's important: **the more measurable the goal, the higher the chance of achieving it**. Saying "I want to

be a leader in my field" isn't enough. What does that mean? Number of clients? Revenue? Satisfaction score? Market share?

Modern Lesson: SMART Is No Longer Just Theory

Today, we know the SMART method from management practice—goals should be **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound**. But Ray Kroc applied it long before it appeared in textbooks.

McDonald's goals were:

- "Open 100 restaurants by the end of the year."
- "Achieve 30% repeat customer visits in the first month."
- "Reduce serving time by 20 seconds within the next three months."

It was a system. And it can be applied to any field—from gastronomy to online business to personal development.

Practical Exercise:

1. **Choose 1 main goal for 3 months.** Focus on a goal that will bring you closer to your vision. Write it down using the SMART formula. *Example: "By September 30th, acquire 10 new B2B clients with an average order exceeding CZK 20,000."*
2. **Break the goal down into steps.** List 3-5 steps you need to take to achieve the goal. *E.g., create an offer, contact 30 companies, prepare a web presentation, arrange 10 meetings.*

3. **Implement regular measurement.** Every Friday, write down: What did I do? What hindered me? What will I change?

Questions for Reflection:

- Do I have clearly defined goals in my business—or just wishes that repeat in my head?
- If someone asked me today to show them my goals for this quarter, would I have something to present?
- How much more could I achieve if I had every goal broken down into a measurable plan?
- What would Ray Kroc say about my current goals—are they specific, or too vague?

Ray Kroc understood that a **vision without goals is like a map without milestones**. Your task is to transform inspiration into action. And action into a concrete result.

3. Think Big, But Start Small

"Every empire begins with one step." (Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc had a dream—he envisioned a McDonald's restaurant on every corner of America. But he didn't start by building hundreds of branches all at once. He started with just one. In 1955, he opened his first McDonald's restaurant in Des Plaines, Illinois. A small venture that served as a model and testing laboratory for everything that was to come later.

It was the **first step**. And that step determined future success.

Kroc never denied his grand vision. But he understood that the fastest way to a big goal is through a series of small, well-managed steps. He didn't wait for ideal conditions. He didn't immediately need hundreds of millions of dollars. He needed one thing: to **start—smartly, thoughtfully, modestly... but decisively.**

Big thinking doesn't mean big risk

A grand vision is what motivates you. But the reality of business is about small tasks, daily discipline, and the ability to manage details. Ray Kroc wasn't a dreamer lost in unrealistic plans. He acted. And every one of his actions was a step towards what he envisioned.

His approach could be summarized in three sentences:

"Think big. Start small. Act now."

In today's world, full of startup unicorns and media bubbles, it might seem that you have to think globally from the start. But most truly big companies—Amazon, Apple, Airbnb—started in garages, warehouses, or student rooms. The difference was that their founders knew where they were headed from the very beginning.

Lesson for Today's Entrepreneur

Starting with a small project doesn't mean having a small dream. It means **respecting the growth process**. A small beginning allows you to learn, make mistakes, and improve. You create a model that you can scale. Exactly as Ray Kroc did with McDonald's—one restaurant, one manual, one standard. And only once that worked, did he start to grow.

Practical Exercise:

1. **Write down your grand vision.** Don't be afraid to be ambitious. What do you want in 5–10 years? What is your "McDonald's" going to be? *E.g., "I want to build a digital academy that will have 100,000 graduates across Europe within 10 years."*
2. **Find the first small step.** What can you start doing right now? What is the smallest step that will move you forward? *E.g., "Record the first 3 free lessons and put them on the website."*
3. **Write an action plan for 30 days.** What specific small steps will you take in the next month? *E.g., create a content plan, contact 5 mentors, set up a domain, launch the first pilot campaign.*

Questions for Reflection:

- What is my "big why"? And what is my first small step?
- Am I unnecessarily waiting for ideal conditions instead of at least starting small?
- If Ray Kroc were standing next to me—would he advise me to speed up, or to finally just start?
- What could I launch within the next 7 days?

Ray Kroc didn't wait until the whole world was ready. He started with one restaurant. And from it, he built a global empire. **Think like a visionary, act like a pragmatist.** That's the path of great entrepreneurs.

4. Believe in Your Dreams Enough for Others to Share Them

"Vision must be contagious." (Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc had a dream. But the dream alone wouldn't have been enough if he couldn't convey it to others—if his enthusiasm hadn't captured the hearts of the first employees, the first franchisees, the first investors, the first customers. Ray Kroc wasn't just a visionary; he was a master at **instilling belief**.

When he founded McDonald's Corporation in 1955, he didn't have an army of marketers, a branding agency, or social media. He had his **conviction, enthusiasm, and absolute faith** in what he was building. When he spoke about the future of McDonald's, it was hard not to believe him. Not because he had perfect presentations ready, but because he himself believed every word he said.

A Vision You Don't Share Doesn't Exist

Having a vision is important. But if it stays only in your head, it's useless. A true leader must be able to **share it**. And sharing doesn't just mean telling—it means conveying energy, direction, and purpose.

Kroc persuaded the first franchisees to invest in something that didn't yet exist. Not with numbers, but with conviction. Everyone who spoke with him knew he was building something big. And they wanted to be a part of it.

A vision that ignites others has three qualities:

- **It's understandable**—everyone can grasp it within a minute.
- **It's credible**—it has solid foundations; it's not just a fairy tale.
- **It's emotional**—people identify with it; they want to be part of it.

In Today's World: Share, or You'll Be Alone

In the digital age, sharing your vision is even more crucial. Your team, customers, community—everyone wants to know what you believe in and where you're going. **Let them be part of the story.** Give them a reason to root for you. To follow you. To join in.

Many companies fail not because they lack a plan, but because their people have no idea why they should even implement it.

Practical Exercise:

1. **Write your vision as a story.** Not a table, not a plan—a story. Where did you start? Where are you going? Why does it matter? *E.g., "We started with two people and a laptop. Today, we want to create a platform that enables every entrepreneur to succeed without unnecessary barriers."*
2. **Practice your elevator pitch.** Can you articulate your vision so a stranger understands it in 60 seconds? Record yourself. Refine it. Practice.

3. **Share it out loud.** Send it to your team, clients, or publish it on social media. The vision needs to get out. And the more you share it, the stronger it will become.

Questions for Reflection:

- Do you believe in your vision enough to defend it in front of a room full of skeptics?
- Could your employees or partners articulate where you're headed?
- When was the last time you truly shared your vision—not just informed, but inspired?
- If you were seeking investment today, would your vision convince someone to put their time and money into you?

Ray Kroc managed to transform a simple fast-food concept into a global movement. Not just by what he did, but by how much he believed in it. And how he managed to ignite that belief in others. **People follow leaders who know where they're going—and can take them there.**

5. Never Settle for Average

"Mediocrity is the enemy of excellence." (Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc wasn't interested in building "another good restaurant." From the beginning, he knew that good wasn't enough. He wanted to be the best. The fastest, the cleanest, the most efficient. **Mediocrity in his world wasn't an option—it was an insult to what was possible.**

When building McDonald's, he scrutinized every little thing: from the oil temperature to the tone of voice of the staff. Every detail had to be perfect—again and again. If something could be done better, it had to be done immediately. Ray Kroc believed that **excellence isn't a goal—it's a standard.**

Average doesn't sell. Average doesn't inspire.

In a world full of options, people won't choose "an average supplier," "a fairly good product," or "a solid service." They want **exceptionalism**. They want to experience something they'll remember. Something they'll talk about.

Ray understood this long before the era of influencers and reviews. He knew that if a customer left only "satisfied," they might not return. But if they left thrilled, they would talk about it. And they would bring others.

Mediocrity is comfortable. But that's precisely why it's so dangerous. It's the silent killer of growth.

Personal and Company Standards

Every business has its vision—and that should be built on excellence. If you set your bar at "as long as it somehow works," you'll never be a leader. **Set your bar at "do it the way the best in the industry would do it." And then go one step further.**

Ray Kroc often said: "If you have time to do it wrong, you have time to do it over—properly."

His culture was built on **discipline, consistency, and a refusal of excuses**. And that's what gave rise to a brand known worldwide.

Practical Exercise:

1. **Identify areas where you've slipped into mediocrity.** Be brutally honest with yourself. In your product, communication, customer support? Where is "that's good enough"?
2. **Write down one area where you want to achieve excellence.** *E.g., "I want to have the best onboarding process for new clients in the industry."*
3. **Create your own standard of exceptionalism.** What does the 120% version look like? List specific parameters—time, quality, experience, emotion.

Questions for Reflection:

- Do I think every day about how to improve what I do—or do I settle for "it works"?

- If my customers rated my company like a restaurant—would they give us 3 stars, or 5?
- Do I have a culture in my team that tolerates mediocrity—or rejects it?
- What would Ray Kroc change tomorrow if he were running my business?

Ray Kroc wasn't a perfectionist for show. He believed that **excellence was the only right way**. Mediocrity is comfortable. But comfort never builds empires. **Don't ask: "Is it good enough?" Ask: "Is it the best it can be?"**

SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

6. Create a System That Works Without You

"A true entrepreneur builds systems, not dependencies."
(Ray Kroc)

Ray Kroc didn't want to create a full-time job for himself. He wanted to create a **system that worked without him**. A system that could scale. Copy. Replicate. And grow.

McDonald's isn't successful because every branch is run by an exceptional entrepreneur. It's successful because **every branch operates according to an exceptionally designed system**. This ensures that a Big Mac tastes the same in Tokyo, London, or Brno. The customer always gets the same experience—fast, simple, reliable.

This is the **power of a system**. And that's precisely the difference between an employee in their own company and a true entrepreneur.

People Fail. Systems Endure.

Kroc believed that human reliability is limited. People get sick, get tired, forget, or leave. But a well-designed process? That keeps working. And it teaches new people to function the same way.

That's why he created **operational manuals, training centers, and control checklists**. And that's why he could expand so quickly. He didn't have to manage everything personally. He taught people the system—not charismatic leadership.

The question isn't, "Do you have a good team?" but "Do you have a system that could lead even an average team to an above-average result?"

Today's Business Without a System Is a Time Bomb

Many entrepreneurs become victims of their own success. They have more clients, but also more stress. More work, less time. Because everything depends on them. Every email, every decision, every signature. When they disappear, the company stops. That's not freedom. That's a trap.

Ray Kroc knew this. And he built McDonald's so that one day he could step aside—and the company would continue.

Practical Exercise:

1. **List 3 key areas of your business that currently depend exclusively on you.** *E.g., business decisions, client communication, invoicing.*
2. **Choose one and describe it as a repeatable process.** Step by step. What should happen? Who should do it? What does the outcome look like?
3. **Delegate or automate.** Can you hand it over? Set up a tool? Prepare a template or guide? Start with the most repetitive activity—that will bring the fastest relief.

Questions for Reflection:

- Could someone else take over your business for a week today—and would it survive?