

# Anwar Allen

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## Path and Purpose

Through the chaos and violence of World War II, bright spots of human spirit and endurance shone through—Americans whose purpose led them to battlefields across the Atlantic to fight for the future of global freedom. Some might even say it was those bright spots that ultimately led the Allies to victory through those dark days. Anwar Allen's grandfather was one of those bright spots.

In 1941, when America entered the war, it was a nation still marred by segregation, with less than 4,000 African Americans serving in the military. But when duty called, they answered. Anwar's grandfather served as part of the Red Ball Express, a trucking unit that helped supply the front lines. Though African Americans were largely barred from combat units at first, their contributions were vital to the victory that would change the course of human history, and by 1945, over 1.2 million were serving. "It's so meaningful to me that, at a time when African Americans weren't openly accepted in society, my grandfather went over to fight for freedoms that he didn't get to take full advantage of," Anwar says today. "He fought for the values we take for granted today."

When the war ended, Anwar's grandfather followed his path and purpose home to Washington, DC, where, through the support of his wife and her family, he started his own trash collection company. Though he only had a third-grade education, the business excelled, flourishing for forty years. Through that time, he trained and mentored his son-in-law, Anwar's father, passing the company into his capable hands just before his death. And to his grandson, Anwar, he passed on three things: the dog tags he wore during those transformative years of war, the entrepreneurial spirit that led him to create success when opportunity was hard to come by, and the strong sense of purpose that has always guided him.



Now the founder and CEO of Revecent, a cutting-edge sales consulting firm dedicated to assessing, recruiting and optimizing sales teams for their clients, Anwar has followed his own path and purpose to open doors for others. "I think God has a purpose for all of us, and a path for us to reach that purpose," he says. "Mine is helping people and companies reach their full potential. It's exciting to be a part of emerging companies that are looking to take their businesses to the next level."

Launched in 2007, Revecent began as Pipeline Management Consulting, a sales outsourcing company oriented around the development of sales pipelines. It evolved as clients required additional help in recruiting and optimizing their sales force, adding more offerings and solutions to their portfolio of services until 2015, when Anwar saw that outsourcing wasn't his true purpose. "Outsourcing was great, but it's more of an ad-hoc, temporary solution," he explains. "I wanted to leverage my expertise to help companies build successful sales teams internally, addressing the needs of the organization for its growth trajectory and long-term plans." With that, the company rebranded as Revecent.

Today, Revecent uses its proven methodology and system for building high-performance sales teams to help organizations develop their sales forces. With an experienced team highly specialized in their unique sales area specialties, they focus on people, process and technology. "We bring in the right talent to execute the sales plan that we help develop, while providing the interim management needed to hold the team accountable to meeting their goals," Anwar says.

Committed to the idea of revving up revenue, Revecent helps clients take their

businesses to new heights. It can provide customized sales services based on the client's unique needs, but sets itself apart in the industry by bringing a complete solution to the table. "Typically you have recruiting and consulting companies, and then you have training organizations that are separate," he explains. "Revecent brings these services together in a streamlined solution, allowing small and emerging growth companies to leverage our expertise across a variety of sales disciplines to realize their goals."

Shepherding potential from the spark of an idea all the way through to a fully-realized concept, Revecent focuses on business to business sales in the tech and professional services industries, dealing primarily with enterprise products and solutions. Most of its client organizations were founded by entrepreneurs with engineering or technical backgrounds—people who have developed a great product but lack the sales and marketing expertise they need to bring it to market. Anwar loves helping candidates reach that next step in their careers through the recruiting side of the business. "Our goal is to create the infrastructure for sales success, which in turn helps all parties reach their potential," he affirms.

Helping people reach their potential is an integral part of his own path and purpose—something he has pursued since the earliest days of his childhood, thanks to the positive influences of his parents and grandparents. Anwar's father and grandfather are pastors, and growing up in the church, his faith has always been a cornerstone of his character. "My faith has very much had an influence over who I am today," he says.

Anwar was born in Washington, DC, and moved to Northern Virginia at the age of three. He loved being outside, always riding bikes and playing sports with other kids in the neighborhood. They had free reign during the day and only had to be home by dark—a lifestyle that can only be imagined by most of today's children. With his grandparents and extended family all living in the area, Anwar spent a lot of time with family. "As the only boy with three sisters, I got a lot of attention, and everyone had high expectations for me," he remembers. "Growing up in that environment, family has always been very important to me."

Anwar's mother, a nurturing and supportive woman, worked in human resources

for Fairfax County. His father, a consummate leader both professionally and spiritually, operated the family waste management company he had inherited. Being the only boy, Anwar felt a strong sense of independence and responsibility growing up, and enjoyed going to work with his father and watching him run the business. "Even from an early age, I knew I wouldn't work for someone else long-term," he says. "All my friends' parents worked for other people, and I thought it was cool that my dad and grandfather worked for themselves. I saw their entrepreneurial spirits and knew I wanted to run my own business someday."

As a kid, Anwar loved going to Redskins games with his dad. In fifth grade, he made the life-changing decision to start playing football—the sport that would dominate his days all the way through high school graduation. Without brothers at home to compete with, his large reserves of untapped drive finally had an outlet, and as his athleticism developed, he found that he loved the challenges—both physical and mental—that come with winning. "Those challenges shaped my sense of discipline and accountability," he says. "I learned how to collaborate and work with others, even if I didn't agree with everyone on the team. Winning is about finding that common ground to reach your shared goal."

This commitment to overall team success was balanced with the need to compete internally for rank within the team—a dynamic Anwar embraced with great success. He always set his sights on being number one, and though that goal created an internal sense of pressure, it cultivated a lifelong drive to fight, win, and achieve his goals—one that is just as impactful in the business world today as it was on the field all those years ago. "I'm still friends with those teammates today because we share this great camaraderie," he says. "We don't talk that often, but when we get together, we don't skip a beat."

While Anwar disliked his first job, a short-lived stint as a cashier at Burger King at the age of sixteen, he soon landed his first sales job working for a window and siding company out of a condo basement. There, he made cold calls all night offering free in-home estimates. "Those were the kind of calls people would get in the middle of dinner and hate," he laughs. "But I found it was actually fun to talk to different people. When I got rejected, it didn't bother me, I just moved on to the next call. It taught me how to prospect, and most

importantly, how to handle rejection—an important aspect of sales. If one call didn't work out, I'd think, 'maybe the next one.' I could get rejected 99 times, but if I had that one win, the night was still a success."

Anwar's passion for the work was also fueled by his competitive spirit, which was stoked by the whiteboard on the wall that tracked the success of the ten young people working side-by-side in the call center. Whenever an appointment was made, a bell was rung, lighting a friendly fire under the other callers to pick up the pace. "I loved the race to see who was going to make the most money each night, and it allowed me to control my own income for the first time," Anwar remarks. "I saw that in sales, you aren't limited to making a fixed dollar amount per hour. There's the possibility to make more, and you control your own destiny by working hard. That's when I realized that sales was what I wanted to do." Anwar did remarkably well for himself, often raking in \$20 an hour.

Upon graduating from high school, he enrolled at Radford University, where he chose to major in business. In his junior year, he transferred to the George Mason University School of Business. His life then took another unexpected turn when he went in to interview for his first real software sales job. He happened to run into his brother-in-law's father as he was walking into the interview, only to discover that he worked for the very same company. Thanks to a good word from him, Anwar landed the job, ultimately opting to switch to a part-time student so he could focus on making the most of it.

At Allen Systems Group, Anwar worked in federal sales, where the cold calling skills he had cultivated in high school quickly propelled him to remarkable success. "I was selling a more sophisticated and technical product, and though I had natural sales ability, his mentorship really polished me into a pro," Anwar affirms. "He taught me how to qualify opportunities, develop relationships, and master the fundamentals." Anwar also underwent formal sales training programs, which were helpful but did not always impart lasting improvements. For him, the most transformative learning came through the daily work of implementing improvements through integrating them into his process. "I saw what didn't work in sales force training," he says. "That's why now, with Revecent, we focus on the

overall sales system and reinforcement."

During that time, in 2004, Anwar and his high school sweetheart, Betsy, welcomed their first child into the world. He then accepted a sales and business development position at Winward Consulting Group, an IT services company, in 2005. There, Anwar worked to open the door to large accounts and partnered with software companies to resell their products, and was very successful at landing appointments with hard-to-reach decision makers. "Through that work, I realized that a lot of companies struggle with business development, lead generation, and getting in the door with new accounts," he recalls. "They're great at managing and growing existing accounts, but they didn't know how to unlock new opportunities through proper cold calling and prospecting techniques. I realized I could package up those skills as a service, so I decided to start my business."

It was a big lifestyle change to go from earning a sizeable income to reinvesting everything into launching a new business. Anwar was blessed to have a wife that supported his vision. "She's been so supportive at every step of the way," he reflects. "Whenever she saw that something was important to me and to our family, she would help make it happen, never doubting me. We had to make a lot of sacrifices for me to run my own company, and it hasn't always been easy. I'm so grateful that she's stuck with me and my vision, when most people would have told me to give up and pursue a safer option."

Anwar and Betsy now have three children, and thanks to their commitment and hard work, the professional risks have paid off. For instance, his approach and success recently landed him in Mindshare's Class of 2017, a network of like-minded entrepreneurs and business owners who share their experiences and insights to lift each other up. "I've done a lot of learning along the way, and I don't have a board of directors or mentors, so Mindshare is incredibly helpful," he remarks. "It's a way of giving back, and you get a lot in return." Anwar also supports Facets, a Fairfax County nonprofit fighting to combat homelessness.

In advising young people entering the working world today, Anwar urges them to connect with their purpose in choosing their path through life. "Be passionate and professional, and take the time to figure out what's most meaningful

to you,” he says. “Once you know, pursue it with all you have. Purpose is the line that connects my family from one generation to the next, linking me to the perseverance of my grandfather and the leadership legacy of my father. Purpose is what compels me to be a responsible, accountable person that others can look up to and depend on. And purpose is the path that connects each person to a happy, successful life, even when they feel lost. When you walk with purpose, you’re bound to find your way forward.”

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*President and founder of Bernhardt Wealth Management and author of Profiles in Success: Inspiration from Executive Leaders in the Washington D.C. Area, Gordon provides financial planning and wealth management services to affluent individuals, families and business-owners throughout the Washington, DC area. Since establishing his firm in 1994, he and his team have been focused on providing high-quality service and independent financial advice to help clients make informed decisions about their money. For more information, visit [www.BernhardtWealth.com](http://www.BernhardtWealth.com) and [Gordon's Blog](#).*

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