

What Drew Jerry Rice

Hall of Famer Jerry Rice is considered by many experts to be the best wide receiver to ever play in the National Football League.

Rice, 51, played 20 seasons in the NFL – with the San Francisco 49ers from 1985 – 2000 and with the Oakland Raiders from 2001 – 2004, and finished with the Seattle Seahawks in 2004.

He is the all-time leader in most statistical categories for wide receivers and the all-time NFL leader in receptions, touchdown receptions and yards. Rice was selected to the Pro Bowl 13 times and named All-Pro 12 times in his 20 seasons. He won three Super Bowl rings playing for the 49ers and an American Football Conference championship with the Oakland Raiders.



You would think that he must have been highly recruited coming out of high school by some of the top colleges in the country. And he was. But he wound up playing at Mississippi Valley State in Itta Bena, Miss.

Rice was once asked why he chose that school over all the offers from the big-time schools, such as UCLA.



Mississippi Valley State, he said, “was the only school to come to my house and give me a personal visit.”

Those large, well-known football programs, he added, sent cards, letters and advertisements, but only one, MVSU, extended him a personal invitation.

I’ve seen – and perhaps you have, too – a sign proclaiming: *We have snail mail, email and voice mail, but whatever happened to face-mail?*

Jerry Rice’s experience in recruiting – in the 1980 time frame – proves the power of face-to-face communication. It was true then, and it still is today, even amidst the explosion in use and popularity of social media.

When it comes to marketing, personal conversations beat brochures and print/electronic advertising.

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If there is a service issue, getting in front of the customer, when possible, is much preferred over emails or telephone calls.

For a celebratory moment – involving a resident, family member or an associate – be part of it, with handshakes, hugs or cheering words. These are memorable, and meaningful times, too, for all involved.

Our business is all about relationships – built by personal contact.

– Beecher Hunter