As a teen runaway (before he graduated from high school), Frank Abagnale passed bad checks and convincingly pretended he was a Pan American pilot. Growing tired of that gig, he decided he'd be a doctor, then a lawyer and - near the end of his hoodwinking days - a sociology professor. A former police chief from Houston, Texas once observed:

Frank Abagnale could write a check on toilet paper, drawn on the Confederate States Treasury, sign it 'U.R. Hooked,' and cash it at any bank in town, using a Hong Kong driver's license for identification. (Catch Me If You Can, page 116)

As his criminal skills grew, so did his ambitions. He learned all about The Art of the Steal from firsthand experience. Although his parents didn't know it for a long time, Frank Abagnale had become a notorious thief.