

# **CHAPTER 2**

# **SUCCESS**

Wining Strategies

Success is not an accident. It is the result of our attitude and our attitude is a choice. Hence success is a matter of choice and not chance.

Most crackpots keep waiting for a jackpot. But can that bring success?

A priest was driving by and saw an exceptionally beautiful farm. He stopped his car to appreciate the bountiful crop. The farmer was riding on his tractor and saw the priest at the corner. He drove towards the Priest and when he got there the priest said, "God has blessed you with a beautiful farm. You should be grateful for it. The farmer replied, "Yes, God has blessed me with a beautiful farm and I am grateful for it, but you should have seen this farm when God had the whole farm to himself!"

How come one person moves forward with one success after another, and yet some are still getting ready?

How come one man goes through life crossing one hurdle after another, accomplishing his goals while another struggles and gets nowhere?

If the answer to these two questions can become part of the curriculum, it could revolutionize the educational system. The uncommon man seeks opportunity, whereas the common man seeks security. We need to keep our minds on what we want, not on what we don't want.

## **WHAT IS SUCCESS?**

A lot of research has gone into the subject of success and failure. All that we need to do is learn our lessons from history. When we study the life histories of successful people, we find that they have certain qualities in common no matter which period of history they lived in. Success leaves clues and if we identify and adopt the qualities of successful people, we shall be successful. Similarly, there are characteristics common in all failures. If we avoid those characteristics, then we shall not be failures. Success is no mystery, but simply the result of consistently applying some basic principles. The reverse is just as true: Failure is simply a result of making a few mistakes repeatedly. All of this might sound too simplistic, but the fact is that most truths are very simple. I'm not saying they are easy, but they certainly are simple.

To laugh often and love much;  
To win the respect of intelligent persons  
and the affection of children;  
To earn the approval of honest critics  
and endure the betrayal of false friends ;  
To appreciate beauty;  
To find the best in others;  
To give off one's self without the  
slightest thought of return;  
To have accomplished a task, whether  
by a healthy child, a rescued soul, a  
garden patch, or a redeemed social condition;  
To have played and laughed with  
Enthusiasm and sung with exaltation;  
To know that even one life has breathed

easier because you have lived;  
This is to have succeeded.

Anonymous

## HOW DO WE DEFINE SUCCESS?

What makes a person successful? How do we recognize success?

To some people, success might mean wealth. To others, it is recognition, good health, good family, happiness, satisfaction, and peace of mind. What this really tells us is that success is subjective. It can mean different things to different people. The definition that I feel summarizes "success" well is:

*Success is the progressive realization of a worthy goal.*

Earl Nightingale

Let's look at these definitions carefully.

"Progressive" means that success is a journey, not a destination. We never arrive. After we reach one goal, we go on to the next and the next and the next.

"Realization" means it is an experience. Outside forces cannot make me feel successful. I have to feel it within myself. It is internal not external.

"Worthy" refers to our value system. Which way are we heading? Positive or negative? Worthiness determines the quality of the journey. That is what gives meaning and fulfillment. Success without fulfillment is empty.

Why? "Goals" are important. Because they give us a sense of direction.

Success does not mean being accepted by everyone. There are some groups I would not want to be accepted by, out of choice. I would rather be criticized by fools than appreciated by unsavory characters.

I define success as a manifestation of good luck that results from inspiration, aspiration, desperation and perspiration; generally in that sequence.

Success and happiness go hand in hand. Success is getting what you want and happiness is wanting what you get!

Existence alone is not success! It is a lot more!

Do more than exist -- live  
Do more than touch -- feel  
Do more than look -- observe  
Do more than read -- absorb  
Do more than hear -- listen  
Do more than listen -- understand

John H. Rhodes

## SOME OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS (REAL OR IMAGINED)

- ◆ Ego
- ◆ Fear of failure success ; lack of self esteem
- ◆ No plan

- ◆ Lack of formalized goals
- ◆ Life changes
- ◆ Procrastination
- ◆ Family responsibility
- ◆ Financial security issues
- ◆ Lack of focus, being muddled
- ◆ Giving up vision for promise of money
- ◆ Doing too much alone
- ◆ Over-commitment
- ◆ Lack of commitment
- ◆ Lack of training
- ◆ Lack of persistence
- ◆ Lack of priorities

## **THE WINNING EDGE**

In order to get the winning edge , we need to strive for excellence, not perfection. Striving for perfection is neurotic; striving for excellence is progress, because there is nothing that can't be done better or improved.

All that we need is a little edge. The winning horse in the races wins 5-to-1 or 10-to-1. Do you think he is five or ten times faster than the other horses? Of course not. He may only be faster by a fraction, by a nose, but the rewards are five or ten times greater.

Is it fair? Who cares? It doesn't matter. Those are the rules of the game. That is the way the game is played. The same is true in our lives. Successful people are not ten times smarter than the people who fail. They may be better by a nose, but the rewards are ten times bigger.

We don't need to improve 1,000% in any one area. All we need is to improve 1% in 1,000 different areas, which is a lot easier. That is the winning edge!

## **STRUGGLE**

*Trials in life can be tragedies or triumphs, depending on how we handle them. Triumphs don't come without effort.*

*A biology teacher was teaching his students how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly. He told the students that in the next couple of hours, the butterfly would struggle to come out of the cocoon. But no one should help the butterfly. Then he left.*

*The students were waiting and it happened. The butterfly struggled to get out of the cocoon, and one of the students took pity on it and decided to help the butterfly out of the cocoon against the advice of his teacher. He broke the cocoon to help the butterfly so it didn't have to struggle anymore. But shortly afterwards the butterfly died.*

*When the teacher returned, he was told what happened. He explained to this student that by helping the butterfly, he had actually killed it because it is a law of nature that the struggle to come out of the cocoon actually helps develop and strengthen its wings. The boy had deprived the butterfly of its struggle and the butterfly died.*

*Apply this same principle to our lives. Nothing worthwhile in life comes without a struggle. As parents we tend to hurt the ones we love most because we don't allow them to struggle to gain strength.*

## OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

People who have overcome obstacles are more secure than those who have never faced them. We all have problems and we feel discouraged some time. Most people get disappointed; but winners don't get disheartened. The answer is perseverance.

An English proverb says, "A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner." Everything is difficult before it becomes easy. We cannot run away from our problems. Only losers quit and give up.

Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.

--Abigail Van Buren

## HOW DO WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

True success is measured by the feeling of knowing you have done a job well and have achieved your objective.

Success is not measured by our position in life but by the obstacles we overcame to get there.

Success in life is not determined by how we are doing compared with others, but by how we are doing compared with what we are capable of doing. Successful people compete against themselves. They better their own record and keep improving constantly.

Success is not measured by how high we go up in life but by how many times we bounce back when we fall down. It is this bounce back ability that determines success.

## EVERY SUCCESS STORY IS ALSO A STORY OF GREAT FAILURE

*Failure is the highway to success. Tom Watson Sr. said, "If you want to succeed, double your failure rate."*

*If you study history, you will find that all stories of success are also stories of great failures. But people don't see the failures. They only see one side of the picture and they say that person got lucky: "He must have been at the right place at the right time."*

*Let me share someone's life history with you. This was a man who failed in business at the age of 21; was defeated in a legislative race at age 22; failed again in business at age 24; overcame the death of his sweetheart at age 26; had a nervous breakdown at age 27; lost a congressional race at age 34; lost a senatorial race at age 45; failed in an effort to become vice-president at age 47; lost a senatorial race at age 49; and was elected president of the United States at age 52.*

*This man was Abraham Lincoln.*

*Would you call him a failure? He could have quit. But to Lincoln, defeat was a detour and not a dead end.*

*In 1913, Lee De Forest, inventor of the triodes tube, was charged by the district attorney for using fraudulent means to mislead the public into buying stocks of his company by claiming that he could transmit the human voice across the Atlantic. He was publicly humiliated. Can you imagine where we would be without his invention?*

*A New York Times editorial on December 10, 1903, questioned the wisdom of the Wright Brothers who were trying to invent a machine, heavier than air, that would fly. One week later, at Kitty Hawk, the Wright Brothers took their famous flight.*

*Colonel Sanders, at age 65, with a beat-up car and a \$100 check from Social Security, realized he had to do something. He remembered his mother's recipe and went out selling. How many doors did he have to knock on before he got his first order? It is estimated that he had knocked on more than a thousand doors before he got his first order. How many of us quit after three tries, ten tries, a hundred tries, and then we say we tried as hard as we could?*

*As a young cartoonist, Walt Disney faced many rejections from newspaper editors, who said he had no talent. One day a minister at a church hired him to draw some cartoons. Disney was working out of a small mouse infested shed near the church. After seeing a small mouse, he was inspired. That was the start of Mickey Mouse.*

*Successful people don't do great things, they only do small things in a great way. One day a partially deaf four year old kid came home with a note in his pocket from his teacher, "Your Tommy is too stupid to learn, get him out of the school." His mother read the note and answered, "My Tommy is not stupid to learn, I will teach him myself." And that Tommy grew up to be the great Thomas Edison. Thomas Edison had only three months of formal schooling and he was partially deaf.*

*Henry Ford forgot to put the reverse gear in the first car he made.*

*Do you consider these people failures? They succeeded in spite of problems, not in the absence of them. But to the outside world, it appears as though they just got lucky.*

*All success stories are stories of great failures. The only difference is that every time they failed, they bounced back. This is called failing forward, rather than backward. You learn and move forward. Learn from your failure and keep moving.*

*In 1914, Thomas Edison, at age 67, lost his factory, which was worth a few million dollars, to fire. It had very little insurance. No longer a young man, Edison watched his lifetime effort go up in smoke and said, "There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burnt up. Thank God we can start anew." In spite of disaster, three weeks later, he invented the phonograph. What an attitude!*

Below are more examples of the failures of successful people:

1. Thomas Edison failed approximately 10,000 times while he was working on the light bulb.
2. Henry Ford was broke at the age of 40.
3. Lee Iacocca was fired by Henry Ford II at the age of 54.
4. Young Beethoven was told that he had no talent for music, but he gave some of the best music to the world.

Setbacks are inevitable in life. A setback can act as a driving force and also teach us humility. In grief you will find courage and faith to overcome the setback. We need to learn to become victors, not victims. Fear and doubt short-circuit the mind.

Ask yourself after every setback: What did I learn from this experience? Only then will you be able to turn a stumbling block into a stepping stone.

### **IF YOU THINK**

If you think you are beaten, you are.

If you think you dare not, you don't!  
If you like to win, but think you can't,  
It's almost a cinch you won't.

you think you'll lose, you're lost;  
For out in the world we find  
Success begins with a fellow's will;  
It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are,  
You've got to think high to rise,  
You've got to be sure of yourself before  
You can ever win a prize.

Life's battles don't always go  
To the stronger and faster man,  
But sooner or later the man who wins  
Is the man who thinks he can.

## **THE GREATEST GIFT**

Man, of all creatures, is physically the most ill equipped in this world. He cannot fly like a bird, can be killed by a tiny insect, cannot outrun a leopard, cannot swim like an alligator, cannot climb the tree like a monkey, doesn't have the eye of an eagle, nor does he have the claws and teeth of a wild cat. Physically, man is helpless and defenseless.

But nature is reasonable and kind. Nature's greatest gift to man is the ability to think. He can create his own environment, whereas animals adapt to their environment.

Sadly, very few people use the greatest gift the ability to think to its full potential.

Failures are of two kinds: those who did and never thought and those who thought and never did. Going through life without using our ability to think is like shooting without aiming.

Life is like a cafeteria. You take' your tray, select your food and pay at the other end. You can get anything you want as long as you are willing to pay the price. In a cafeteria, if you wait for people to serve you, you will wait forever. Life is like that too. You make choices and pay the price.

## **LIFE IS FULL OF CHOICES AND COMPROMISES**

There is a contradiction here. If life is full of choices, where is the question of compromises? Remember, even a compromise is a choice. Let's evaluate this.

### **How is Life Full of Choices?**

When we eat too much, we make a choice to be overweight. When we drink too much, we make a choice to have a headache the next day. If you drink and drive, you make a choice to risk being killed or killing someone in an accident. When we ill treat people, we make a choice to be ill treated in return. When we don't care about other people, we make a choice not to be cared for by other people.

Choices have consequences. We are free to make our choice but after we have chosen, the choice controls us. We have equal opportunity to be unequal. The choice is ours. Life

can be compared to a pottery maker who shapes clay in any form he wants. Similarly, we can mold our lives into any shape we want.

### **How is Life Full of Compromises?**

Life is not just party and pleasure; it is also pain and despair. Unthinkable things happen. Sometimes everything turns upside down. Bad things happen to good people. Some things are beyond control, such as physical disability and birth defects. We cannot choose our parents or the circumstances of our birth. So if the ball bounced that way, sorry. But what do we do from here; cry or take the ball and run? That is a choice we have to make.

On a clear day, there are hundreds of boats sailing in all different directions in a lake. How come? Even though the wind is blowing in one direction, the sailboats are going in different directions. What is the difference? It depends on the way the sail is set, and that is determined by the sailor. The same is true of our lives. We can't choose the direction of the wind, but we can choose how we set the sail.

We can choose our attitude even though we cannot always choose our circumstances. The choice is either to act like a victor or a victim. It is not our position but our disposition that determines our destiny.

It takes both rain and sunshine to create a rainbow. Our lives are no different. There is happiness and sorrow. There is the good and the bad ; dark and bright spots. If we can handle adversity, it only strengthens us. We cannot control all the events that happen in our lives, but we can control how we deal with them.

Richard Blechnyden wanted to promote Indian tea at the St. Louis World fair in 1904. It was very hot and no one wanted to sample his tea. Blechnyden saw that all the other iced drinks were doing flourishing business. It dawned on him to make his tea into an iced drink, mix in sugar and sell it. He did and people loved it. That was the introduction of iced tea to the world.

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will, we can react responsibly or resentfully. Human beings are not like an action which has no choice. An action cannot decide whether to become a giant tree or to become food for the squirrels. Human beings have choices. If nature gives us a lemon, we have a choice: either cry or make lemonade.

### **QUALITIES THAT MAKE A PERSON SUCCESSFUL**

#### **1. Desire**

*The motivation to succeed comes from the burning desire to achieve a purpose. Napoleon Hill wrote, "Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve."*

*A young man asked Socrates the secret to success. Socrates told the young man to meet him near the river the next morning. They met. Socrates asked the young man to walk with him toward the river. When the water got up to their neck, Socrates took the young man by surprise and ducked him into the water. The boy struggled to get out but Socrates was strong and kept him there until the boy started turning blue. Socrates pulled his head out of the water and the first thing the young man did was to gasp and take a deep breath of air. Socrates asked, "What did you want the most when you were there?" The boy replied, "Air." Socrates said, "That is the secret to success. When you*



*want success as badly as you wanted the air, then you will get it." There is no other secret.*

*A burning desire is the starting point of all accomplishment. Just like a small fire cannot give much heat, a weak desire cannot produce great results.*

## **2. Commitment**

Integrity and wisdom are the two pillars on which to build and keep commitments. This point is best illustrated by the manager, who told one of his staff members, "Integrity is keeping your commitment even if you lose money and wisdom is not to make such foolish commitments."

Prosperity and success are the result of our thoughts and decisions. It is our decision what thoughts will dominate our lives. Success is not an accident. It is the result of our attitude.

### **Playing to Win Requires Commitment**

There is a big difference between playing to win and playing not to lose. When we play to win, we play with enthusiasm and commitment; whereas when we play not to lose, we are playing from a position of weakness. When we play not to lose, we are playing to avoid failure. We all want to win, but very few are prepared to pay the price to prepare to win. Winners condition and commit themselves to winning. Playing to win comes out of inspiration, whereas playing not to lose comes out of desperation.

There are no ideal circumstances. There will never be. To reach anywhere we cannot just drift nor lie at anchor. We need to sometimes sail with the wind and sometimes against it, but sail we must.

Ask any coach or athlete what the difference between the best and the worst team is. There would be very little difference in their physique, talent and ability. The biggest difference you will find is emotional difference. The winning team has dedication and they make the extra effort.

To a winner, the tougher the competition

- ◆ the greater the incentive
- ◆ the more motivated he is
- ◆ the better the performance
- ◆ the sweeter the victory

New challenges develop new potential. Most athletes' best performances have come when the odds are slightly against them. That is when they dig deeper into their reservoir.

*When I'd get tired and want to stop, I'd wonder what my next opponent was doing. When I could see him still working, I'd start pushing myself. When I see him in the shower, I'd push myself harder.*

*--Dan Gable, Olympic gold medalist in wrestling*

Success is not in the achievement but in the achieving. Some people never try because they are afraid to lose. At the same time, they don't want to stay where they are because

they are afraid to be left behind. There is a risk either way. Ships that go out into the open water face risk from a storm. But if they sit in the harbor, they would rust and that is not what they were built for. That is the difference between playing to win and playing not to lose. One cannot be committed and not take risks. People who play to win thrive on pressure and those who play not to lose don't know how to succeed.

Pressure makes people who play to win, prepare harder. For those who play not to lose, the pressure saps the energy. They want to win but they are so afraid to lose that they can't reach their full potential. They lose energy worrying about losing instead concentrating their efforts on winning.

Losers want security, winners seek opportunity. Losers are more afraid of life than death. Failing is not a crime but lack of effort is.

*The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor.*

Vince Lombardi

### **Conviction Leads to Commitment**

There is a difference between preferences and conviction. Preferences are negotiable; convictions are not. Preferences give way under pressure; convictions become stronger. That is why it is important to have a good value system so that our convictions are worthy because convictions in turn lead to commitment.

### **3. Responsibility**

*A duty which becomes a desire will ultimately become a delight.*

--George Gritter

People with character accept responsibilities. They make decisions and determine their own destiny in life. Accepting responsibilities involves taking risks and being accountable which is sometimes uncomfortable. Most people would rather stay in their comfort zone and live passive lives without accepting responsibilities. They drift through life waiting for things to happen rather than making them happen. Accepting responsibilities involves taking calculated, not foolish, risks. It means evaluating all the pros and cons, then taking the most appropriate decision or action. Responsible people don't think that the world owes them a living.

*You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.*

*You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.*

*You cannot enrich the poor by impoverishing the rich.*

*You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money.*

*You cannot help the wage earner by pulling down the wage pay or .*

*You cannot build character and courage by taking away man's initiative and independence. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred.*

*You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn.*

*You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.*

--Abraham Lincoln

The retiring president of a company after a standard farewell, gave two envelopes marked No. 1 and No. 2 to the incoming president, and said, "Whenever you run into a management crisis you cannot handle by yourself , open envelope No. 1. At the next crisis, open the second one."

A few years later, a major crisis came. The president went into the safe and pulled out the first envelope. It said, "Blame it on your predecessor." A few years later a second crisis came. The president went for the second envelope, and it said, "Prepare two envelopes for your successor."

Responsible people accept and learn from their mistakes. Some people never learn. We can do three things about mistakes:

- ◆ Ignore them
- ◆ Deny them
- ◆ Accept and learn from them

The third alternative takes courage; it is risky but rewarding. If, instead, we defend our weaknesses, we actually start building our lives around them, making them a center point, rather than overcoming them.

#### **4. Hard Work**

Success is not something that you run into by accident. It takes a lot of preparation and character. Everyone likes to win but how many are willing to put in the effort and time to prepare to win? It takes sacrifice and self-discipline. There is no substitute for hard work. Henry Ford said, "The harder you work, the luckier you get."

The world is full of willing workers, some willing to work and the others willing to let them.

*I like to work half a day. I don't care if it is the first 12 hours or the second 12 hours.*

*--Kammons Wilson, CEO of Holiday Inn*

One cannot develop a capacity to do anything without hard work, just as a person cannot learn how to spell by sitting on a dictionary. Professionals make things look easy because they have mastered the fundamentals of whatever they do.

*If people knew how hard I had to work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem wonderful at all.*

*--Michaelangelo*

An executive called a company to check on a potential candidate. He asked the candidate's supervisor, "How long has he worked for you?" The man replied, "Three days." The executive said, "But he told me he was with you for three years." The man replied, "That is right, but he worked three days."

*The average person puts only 25% of his energy and ability into his work. The world takes off its hat to those who put in more than 50% of their capacity, and stands on its head for those few and far between souls who devote 100%.*

*--Andrew Carnegie*

Success is the result of believing in asking how much work and not how little work, how many hours not how few hours. The best musicians practice every day. Winners don't need to apologize for winning because they work hard and long. It didn't come easy. Everything that we enjoy is a result of someone's hard work. Some work is visible and other work goes unseen, but both are equally important. Some people stop working as soon as they find a job. Regardless of the unemployment statistics, it is hard to find good people to work. Many people don't understand the difference between idle time and leisure time. Idle time amounts to wasting or stealing time; leisure time is earned. Procrastinating amounts to not working.

Excellence is not luck; it is the result of a lot of hard work and practice. Hard work and practice make a person better at whatever he is doing.

*Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle.*

*--Abraham Lincoln*

Hard work is both a beginning and an end in itself. The harder a person works, the better he feels; and the better he feels, the harder he works. The best ideas will not work unless you work the ideas. Great talent without will power and hard work is a waste.

*We need to learn from nature. The duck keeps paddling relentlessly underneath but appears smooth and calm on top.*

*Once when Fritz Kreisler, the great violinist, finished a concert, someone came up to the stage and said, "I'd give my life to play the way YOU do." Kreisler replied, "I did!"*

*There is no magic wand for success. In the real world, success comes to doers, not observers. A horse that pulls cannot kick; a horse that kicks cannot pull. Let's pull and stop kicking.*

*Without hard work there is no success.*

*Nature gives birds their food but does not put it in their nest. They have to work hard for it. Nothing comes easy. Milton rose every morning at 4 a.m. to write Paradise Lost. It took Noah Webster 36 years to compile Webster's Dictionary.*

*Even small accomplishments require hard work and are better than big talk.*

## **5. Character**

Character is the sum total of a person's values, beliefs and personality. It is reflected in our behavior, in our actions. It needs to be preserved more than the richest jewel in the world. To be a winner takes character. George Washington said, "I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most valuable of all titles, the character of an honest man."

It is not the polls or public opinions but the character of the leader that determines the course of history. There is no twilight zone in integrity. The road to success has many pitfalls. It takes a lot of character and effort not to fall into them. It also takes character not to be disheartened by critics.

How come most people love success but hate successful people? Whenever a person rises above average, there will always be someone trying to rip him apart. Chances are pretty good when you see a person on top of a hill, that he just didn't get there, but had to endure a tough climb. It's no different in life. In any profession, a successful person will be envied by those who are not. Don't let criticism distract you from reaching your goal. Average people play it safe to avoid criticism, which can be easily avoided by saying, doing or being nothing. The more you accomplish, the more you risk being criticized. It seems there is a relationship between success and criticism. The greater the success the more the criticism.

Critics have always been sitting at the sidelines. They are underachievers who shout at doers, telling them how to do it right. But remember critics are not the leaders or doers and it is worthwhile asking them to come down to where the action is.

*The critic is one who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.*

Oscar Wilde

There is another breed of people who are willing to help others until the others are able to help themselves. But as soon as they are able to help themselves, this group of people make life as miserable and as uncomfortable as possible. This is part of life and if we have to succeed, we have to do it in spite of them. This kind of behavior is the result of jealousy.

### **Character is a Combination**

Character is a combination of integrity, unselfishness, understanding, conviction, courage, loyalty and respect.

What is a pleasant personality with character?

- ◆ It is a class by itself.
- ◆ It is composure.
- ◆ It is poise.
- ◆ It is surefootedness and confidence without arrogance.
- ◆ It is being considerate.
- ◆ It is never making excuses.
- ◆ It is knowing that courtesy and good manners take many small sacrifices.
- ◆ It is learning from past mistakes.
- ◆ It has nothing to do with money or blue blood.
- ◆ It never builds itself by destroying others.
- ◆ It is substance, not just form.
- ◆ It can walk with the elite and yet maintain the common touch.
- ◆ It is a gentle word, a kind look and a good-natured smile.
- ◆ It is the secret pride that stands against tyranny.
- ◆ It is comfortable with itself and others.

- ◆ It is the classic touch that gives the winning edge.
- ◆ It works wonders.
- ◆ It accomplishes miracles.
- ◆ It is easy to recognize, hard to define.
- ◆ It is accepting responsibility.
- ◆ It is humility.
- ◆ It is graciousness in victory and defeat.
- ◆ It is not fame and fortune.
- ◆ It is not a plaque.
- ◆ It is permanent.
- ◆ It is intangible.
- ◆ It is being courteous and polite without being subservient.
- ◆ It is being classy without being corky.
- ◆ It is self-discipline and knowledge.
- ◆ It is self-contained.
- ◆ It is a gracious winner and an understanding loser.

More difficult than success itself is; how we handle success. Many people know how to become successful but after they become successful, they don't know how to handle it. That is why ability and character go hand in hand. Ability will get you success, character will keep you successful.

We don't unfold or discover ourselves, we create and build ourselves into the kind of person we want to be.

Character building starts from infancy and goes on until death. Character does not need success. It is success. Just like a gardener has to keep weeding to prevent weeds from eating the life of the garden, we need to keep building and developing our character by weeding out our faults.

### **Adversity Builds and/or Reveals Character**

Under adverse circumstances, some people break records and others break down. A gem cannot be polished without friction, nor can you get the finest steel without putting it through fire. Similarly, adversity reveals a person's character and introduces it to himself. There is a saying that came from Russia: "A hammer shatters glass but forges steel." There is a lot of truth in it. Are we made of glass or steel? It is the same hammer. Just like carbon determines the quality of steel, character determines the quality of man.

### **6. Positive Believing**

What is the difference between positive thinking and positive believing? What if you could actually listen to your thoughts? Are they positive or negative? How are you programming your mind, for success or failure? How you think has a profound effect on your performance.

Having a positive attitude and being motivated is a choice we make every morning.

Living a positive life is not easy; but then neither is negative living. Given a choice, I would go for positive living.

Positive thinking is better than negative thinking and it will help us use our abilities to the fullest.

Positive believing is a lot more than positive thinking. It is having a reason to believe that positive thinking will work. Positive believing is an attitude of confidence that comes with preparation. Having a positive attitude without making the effort is nothing more than having a wishful dream. The following illustrates positive believing.

*Does Lockheed organization have a reason to believe positively? You bet.*

*Several years ago Lockheed introduced the L-1011 Tristar plane. In order to ensure safety and test the strength of the jetliner, Lockheed exposed the plane to the roughest treatment for 18 months, costing \$1.5 billion. Hydraulic jacks, electronic sensors and a computer put the airplane through its paces for more than 36,000 simulated flights, amounting to 100 years of airline service, without one single malfunction. Finally after hundreds of tests the aircraft was given the seal of approval. \**

*There is every reason to believe that this plane would be safe to fly, because of all the effort put into preparation.*

## **7. Give More Than You Get**

It is easy to succeed today. We have no competition. If you want to get ahead in life, go the extra mile. There is no competition on the extra mile. Are you willing to do a little more than you get paid for? How many people you know are willing to do a little bit more than what they get paid for? Hardly any. Most people don't want to do what they get paid for and there is a second category of people who only want to do what they can get by with. They fulfill their quota just to keep their jobs. There is a small fraction who are willing to do a little bit more than what they get paid for. Why do they do more? If you fall into the last category, then where is your competition?

The advantages of doing more than you get paid for are :

- ◆ You make yourself more valuable, regardless of what you do and where you work.
- ◆ It gives you more confidence.
- ◆ People start looking at you as a leader.
- ◆ Others start trusting you.
- ◆ Superiors start respecting you.
- ◆ It breeds loyalty from both your subordinates and your superiors.
- ◆ It generates cooperation.

If you work for a man for heaven's sake work for him.

--Kim Hubbard

These people are always wanted everywhere regardless of age, experience or academic qualifications: hardworking people who can work without supervision; people who are punctual and considerate; people who listen carefully and carry out instructions accurately; people who tell the truth; people who don't sulk when called upon to pitch in at the time of an emergency; people who are result rather than task oriented; people who are cheerful and courteous.

Always think in terms of giving value added whether to customers, friends, your spouse, parents or children. Whenever you do anything, ask yourself, "How can I add value to what I am doing?" or "How can I give added value to others?"



The key to success can be summed up in four words: "and then some more." Winners do what they are supposed to and then some more. Winners do their duty and then some more. Winners are courteous and generous and then some more. Winners can be counted on and then some more. Winners put in 100% and then some more.

Ability without dependability, responsibility and flexibility is a liability.

8. **Adapted from Daily Motivations for African American Success by Dennis Kimbro, June 29,1993, Fawcett Press, New York.**

Why are some highly intelligent people, with impressive academic qualifications living failures, or at best practicing mediocrity? Because they become experts at why things won't work and build a reserve of negative energy. They don't want to do what they get paid for or they only want to do what they can get by with. No wonder they are living failures. When we give or do more than what we get paid for, we eliminate our competition. In fact, we become the competition. This attitude is much more important than intelligence or a degree.

## 8. The Power of Persistence

*Nothing will take the place of persistence. Talent will not : Nothing is more common than unsuccessful people with talent . Genius will not : Unrewarded genius is a proverb. Education will not: The world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.*

--Calvin Coolidge

The journey to being your best is not easy. It is full of setbacks. Winners have the ability to overcome and bounce back with even greater resolve.

### DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong,  
As they sometimes will,  
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,  
When the funds are low and the debts are high,  
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,  
When care is pressing you down a bit  
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is queer with its twists and turns,  
As every one of us sometimes learns,  
And many a failure turns about  
When he might have won had he stuck it out.  
Don't give up though the pace seems slow  
You may succeed with another blow.

Success is failure turned inside out  
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,  
And you never can tell how close you are,  
It may be near when it seems so far ;  
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit  
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit.



Fritz Kreisler, the great violinist, was once asked, "How do you play so well? Are you lucky?" He replied, "It is practice. If I don't practice for a month, the audience can tell the difference. If I don't practice for a week, my wife can tell the difference. If I don't practice for a day, I can tell the difference."

Persistence means commitment and determination. There is pleasure in endurance. Commitment and persistence is a decision. Athletes put in years of practice for a few seconds or minutes of performance.

Persistence is a decision. It is a commitment to finish what you start. When we are exhausted, quitting looks good. But winners endure. Ask a winning athlete. He endures pain and finishes what he started. Lots of failures have begun well but have not concluded anything. Persistence comes from purpose. Life without purpose is drifting. A person who has no purpose will never persevere and will never be fulfilled.

## 9. Pride of Performance

In today's world, pride in performance has fallen by the wayside because it requires effort and hard work. However, nothing happens unless it is made to happen. When one is discouraged, it is easy to look for shortcuts. However these should be avoided no matter how great the temptation. Pride comes from within, which is what gives the winning edge. Pride of performance does not represent ego. It represents pleasure with humility. The quality of the work and the quality of the worker are inseparable. Half-hearted effort does not produce half results; it produces no results.

*Three people were laying bricks and a passerby asked them what they were doing. The first one replied, "Don't you see I am making a living?" The second one said, "Don't you see I am laying bricks?" The third one said, "I am building a beautiful monument." Three people doing the same thing gave totally different replies. The question is : did they have different attitudes? And would their attitude affect their performance? The answer is a clear yes.*

Excellence comes when the performer takes pride in doing his best. Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it, regardless of what the job is, whether washing cars, sweeping the floor or painting a house.

Do it right the first time, every time. The best insurance for tomorrow is a job well done today.

*Michelangelo was working on a statue for several days and he was taking a long time to retouch every small detail which seemed rather insignificant to a bystander. When asked why he did it, Michelangelo replied, "Trifles make perfection and perfection is no trifle." Most people forget how fast you did a job, but they remember how well it was done.*

*If a man is called to be street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.*

*--Martin Luger King, Jr.*

*One cannot compromise on quality and service. It is said that Ray Kroc, founder of McDonald's, found a fly during one of his visits at a franchise. Two weeks later the franchisee lost his franchise. Ray Kroc said, "You should work for pride and accomplishment. I was brought up to understand that reward will come later."*

*The feeling of a job well done is a reward in itself. It is better to do small things well than do many things poorly.*

## **10. Be Willing to Be a Student--Get a Mentor**

If God and the teacher (guru) are standing together, who does the student salute first? According to Indian culture, the answer is the teacher, because without his direction and help, the student could not have met God.

A mentor or a teacher is a person whose hindsight can become your foresight. Look for someone who can accept you as a mentee or a student. Choose your mentor carefully. A good one will guide and give direction; a bad one will misguide. Show respect. Be an interested student. Teachers like interested students.

The best teachers will not give you something to drink, they will make you thirsty. They will put you on a path to seek answers.

*There is a story about a king in ancient times who wanted to honor a person that made the greatest contribution to society. All kinds of people came, including doctors and entrepreneurs, and they all presented their case for receiving the honor. The king wasn't impressed. Finally an elderly person with a glow on his face walked in and said he was a teacher. The king came down from his throne and bowed to honor the teacher. It is the teacher who makes the highest contribution in shaping the future of society.*

## **DO WE HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE SUCCESSFUL?**

Do all of us have the qualities for success? Some people feel they don't. They stay mediocre and fail. But it doesn't have to be that way. All of us have all of these qualities. They may not be developed to the level that we want them but they are there. We may not know that they are there, but when we find out, our performance changes.

This is like having a million dollars buried in your backyard and not knowing about it. You wouldn't be able to use it. But the moment you find out, your thinking and behavior will change.

The same thing is true with people. We all have hidden treasures. All we need to do is bring them to the surface and use them.

## **WHAT IS HOLDING US BACK?**

What would happen if we drove our car with the brakes on? It wouldn't be smart, would it? What would happen to our car? It will never go full speed because the brakes offer resistance. The car will overheat and break down. If it doesn't break down, the resistance will strain the engine. You have two choices. You can either press the accelerator harder and risk damage, or release the brakes to make the car go faster. This is a good parallel to life, because we go through life with our emotional brakes on. What are the brakes? They are the factors that prevent us from achieving success. The way to release our

emotional brakes is by building a positive attitude, high self-esteem and by accepting responsibility.

## REASONS FOR FAILURE WHY WE DON'T ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE

*Life is like a ten speed bicycle. Most of us have gears we never use.*

*--Charles Schultz*

### 1. Unwillingness to Take Risks

Success involves taking calculated risks. Risk taking does not mean gambling foolishly and behaving irresponsibly. People sometimes mistake irresponsible and rash behavior as risk-taking. They end up with negative results and blame it on bad luck.

Risk-taking is relative. The concept of risk varies from person to person and can be a result of training. To both a trained mountain climber and a novice, mountain climbing is risky, but to the trained person it is not irresponsible risk-taking. Responsible risk-taking is based on knowledge, training, careful study, confidence and competence which give a person the courage to act while facing fear. The person who never does anything makes no mistakes. However, he doesn't realize that not doing anything is his biggest mistake. Many opportunities are lost because of indecision. It is habit-forming and contagious. Take risks but don't gamble. Risk-takers go with their eyes open. Gamblers shoot in the dark.

*Once someone asked a farmer if he had planted wheat for the season. The farmer replied, "No. I was afraid it wouldn't rain." Then the man asked, "Did you plant corn?" The farmer said, "No. I was afraid of insects eating one corn. Then the man asked, " What did you plant ? " The farmer said, "Nothing. I played it safe."*

### RISKS

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.

To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.

To reach outfox another is to risk involvement.

To expose feelings is to risk exposing your true self.

To place your ideas, your dreams, before a crowd is to risk their loss.

To love is to risk not being loved in return.

To live is to risk dying.

To hope is to risk despair.

To try is to risk failure.

But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.

The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing.

They may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, or live.

Chained by their attitudes, they are slaves,

they have forfeited their freedom.  
Only a person who risks is free.

## **2. Lack of persistence**

When problems seem insurmountable, quitting seems to be the easiest way out. It is true for every marriage, job and relationship. Winners are struck but not destroyed. We all have had setbacks in life. Failing does not mean we are failures.

More people fail not because they lack knowledge or talent but because they quit. The total secret of success lies in two words, persistence and resistance. Persist in what must be done and resist what ought not be done.

*A man is a hero not because he is braver than anyone else, but because he is brave for ten minutes longer.*

*--Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## **3. Instant Gratification**

We think short term, not long term. That is limited vision. We are living in an age of instant gratification. There is a pill for everything, from waking you up to putting you to sleep. People want to take a pill to get rid of their problems. When people want to be instant millionaires, they take shortcuts and compromise on their integrity.

The desire to make a million overnight has made the lottery a flourishing business.

Remember that instant gratification never thinks of consequences, only of momentary pleasures.

Today's generation defines the ideal diet as one that will take off five pounds for good intentions. These are people who don't want any more birthdays but want all the presents.

## **4. Lack of Priorities**

People make substitutes where they ought not to. For example, in relationships, they trade money and gifts for affection and time. Some people find it easier to buy things for their children and spouse to compensate for their absence.

When we don't have our priorities right, we waste time, not realizing that time wasted is life wasted. Prioritizing requires discipline to do what needs to be done rather than going by our moods and fancies. Too much emphasis is placed on success and failure rather than doing one's best.

How do you cope with defeat and problems?

Your response to this question says a lot about your character. One of the keys to solving this mystery to success is understanding. Some people have their mind set on money, power, fame or possessions. We have to understand our priorities.

Success does not come by reading or memorizing the principles that lead to success, but by understanding and applying them.

## **5. Looking for Shortcuts**

### **No Free Lunch**

*There is a story about a king who called his advisers and asked them to write down the wisdom of the ages so that he could pass it on to future generations. After a lot of work, the advisers came up with several volumes of wisdom and presented them to the king. The king called his advisers and said that it was too long, people would not read it. They had to condense it. The advisers went back to work and came back with one volume. The king said the same thing. They came back again with one chapter and then one page, and the king said the same thing still until they came up with one sentence that satisfied the king. He said that if there was one piece of wisdom that he wanted to pass on to future generations, it is this one sentence: "There is no free lunch."*

*In every organization or society, there are freeloaders. They are people who want to get a benefit without paying for it. They are looking for freebies. By and large, sometime or the other, most of us have been guilty of being a freeloader. This is typically seen in associations and organizations. Most members are inactive. They want and get the full benefit of the effort of the active ones.*

### **The Easier Way May Actually Be the Tougher Way**

*Once there was a lark singing in the forest. The lark stopped him and asked, "What do you have in the box and where are you going?" The farmer replied that he had worms and that he was going to the market to trade them for some feathers. The lark said, "I have many feathers. I will pluck one and give it to you and that will save me looking for worms." The farmer gave the worms to the lark and the lark plucked a feather and gave it in return. The next day the same thing happened and the day after and on and on until a day came that the lark had no more feathers. Now it couldn't fly and hunt for worms. It started looking ugly and stopped singing and very soon it died.*

*What is the moral of the story?*

*The moral is quite clear what the lark thought was an easy way to get food turned out to be the tougher way after all.*

*Isn't the same thing true in our lives? Many times we look for the easier way, which really ends up being the tougher way.*

### **Losers Look for Quick Fixes**

There are two ways of getting rid of weeds in your yard. The easy way and the not so easy way. The easy way may be to run a lawn mower and the yard looks fine for a while, but that is a temporary answer. Soon the weeds are back. But the not-so-easy way may mean getting down on your hands and knees and pulling out the weeds by the roots. It is time consuming and painful, but the weeds will stay away for a longer time. The first solution appeared easy, but the problem remained. The second solution, was not so easy, but took care of the problem from the roots. The key is to get to the root of the problem.

The same thing is true of our attitude in life. Some people spread their attitude of bitterness and resentment and this attitude keeps cropping up in different parts of their lives. The problem with people today is that they want instant answers. They are looking for one-minute solutions to everything. Just like instant coffee, they want instant happiness. There are no quick fixes. This attitude leads to disappointment.

## **6. Selfishness and Greed**

Individuals and organizations that have a selfish attitude toward each other and toward their customers have no right to expect growth. Their attitude is to keep passing the buck without regard for the welfare of others. Greed always wants more. Needs can be satisfied but greed cannot. It is a cancer of the soul. Greed destroys relationships. How do we gauge our greed index? By asking ourselves three questions:

- ◆ Can I afford it?
- ◆ Do I really need it?
- ◆ If I have it, will it give me peace of mind?

Greed comes out of poor self-esteem, which manifests itself as false pride, pretense or keeping up with the Joneses. The way out of greed is to learn to live within your means and be satisfied. Being contented does not mean lacking ambition.

### **WHERE DOES IT END?**

There is a story about a wealthy farmer who was once offered all the land he could walk on in a day, provided he came back by sundown to the point where he started. To get a new start, early the next morning the farmer started covering ground quickly because he wanted to get as much land as he could. Even though he was tired, he kept going all afternoon because he didn't want to miss this once in a lifetime opportunity to gain more wealth.

Late in the afternoon he realized the condition he had to fulfill to get the land was to get back to the starting point by sundown. His greed had gotten him far enough. He started his return journey, keeping an eye on how close he was to sundown. The closer it got to sundown, the faster he ran. He was exhausted, out of breath and pushed himself beyond the point of endurance. He collapsed upon reaching the starting point and died. He did make it before sundown. He was buried and all the land he needed was a small plot.

There is a lot of truth in this story and a lesson to be learned. Whether the farmer was wealthy or not, any greedy person would have ended the same way.

## **7. Lack of Conviction**

People who lack conviction take the middle of the road; and guess what happens in the middle of the road? They get run over.

People without conviction do not take a stand. They go along to get along because they lack confidence and courage. They conform in order to get accepted even when they know that what they are doing is wrong. They behave like part of a herd.

Some people consider themselves a shade better because they do not support the wrong; however, they lack the conviction to oppose. They do not realize that by not opposing they are actually supporting.

One of the important secrets to success is, instead of being against something, be for something. That way, you don't become part of the problem, but part of the solution. It takes conviction to take a stand.

### **Conviction Takes Faith**

*Faith without action is delusion. Faith does not wait for miracles but produces them. If you think you can or if you think you can't, you are right.*

--Henry Ford

We all have low moments, we all fall down and get hurt. We all have moments when we doubt ourselves and get into self-pity. The point is to overcome these feelings and restore your faith.

There are three kinds of people in this world:

- ◆ People who make things happen
- ◆ People who watch things happen
- ◆ People who wonder what happened

Which category do you fall into?

### **8. Lack of Understanding of Nature's Laws**

Success is a matter of laws and these are the laws of nature. Change is nature's law. We are either moving forward or we are going backward. We are either creating or disintegrating. There is no status quo.

A seed, if it is not planted in the earth to create, disintegrates. Change is inevitable. It is going to happen whether we like it or not. All progress is change but all change is not progress. We must evaluate change and accept it only if it makes sense. Acceptance without evaluation amounts to conforming behavior, a sign of lack of confidence and of low self-esteem.

There is a lot to be said about tradition. Growth for the sake of growth is the philosophy of a cancerous cell. It is negativity spreading all over. That is not growth, that is destruction. Growth, in order to be meaningful, must be positive.

Success is not a matter of luck, but of laws.

#### **Law of Cause and Effect**

In order to succeed, we need to understand the law of cause and effect and the relationship between actions and results.

For every effect, there is a cause. The law of cause and effect is the same as the law of sowing and reaping. The law of sowing and reaping says five things:

- ◆ We must have the desire to sow. Desire is the starting point.
- ◆ What we sow, so shall we reap. If we sow potatoes, we are only going to reap potatoes, not tomatoes.



- ◆ We must sow before we reap. Sowing takes place before reaping; we must give before we get. We cannot expect the fireplace to give us heat before we put in the fuel.  
Some people are constantly looking to get before they give. It does not work this way.
- ◆ When we sow a seed, we do not reap a fruit--our harvest is manifold. If we sow a positive seed our harvest will be manifold in the positive, and if we sow a negative one the harvest shall be manifold in the negative. It is not uncommon to see people going against nature's law.
- ◆ A farmer knows that we cannot sow and reap in the same day. There is always a period of gestation.

It is like the law of physics. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Most of the time people are trying to change the effect while the cause remains. Either we feed our mind with positives constantly or negativity automatically fills the vacuum. Many ancient sages have said what James Allen said in his book *As a Man Thinketh*. A man's mind is like a garden. If we plant good seeds, we will have a good garden. But if we don't plant anything, something will grow and they will be weeds. That is nature's law. The same is true in our lives. I would go a step further. Even if we plant good seeds, weeds will still grow. The process of weeding goes on forever. If you put water in a glass and put it in sub-zero temperature, it will freeze. That is not surprising, that is nature's law. In fact, that is the only thing that will happen.

Our thoughts are causes. You sow a thought, you reap an action. You sow an action, you reap a habit. You sow a habit, you reap a character. You sow a character, you reap a destiny. It all starts with a thought.



## **Laws of Attraction**

We attract to ourselves not what we want but what we are. The old phrase, "Birds of a feather flock together," holds true.

Negative thinkers are dangerous. They attract other negative people, react negatively, expect the worst and they are not disappointed.

Have you observed how at any social occasion successful people attract other successful people? Failures attract other failures, and together they will moan, groan and complain.

Our friends are not the kind of people we want but the kind of people we are.

## **9. Unwillingness to Plan and Prepare**

*Everyone has a will to win but very few have the will to prepare to win.*

*--Vince Lombardi*

Most people spend more time planning a party or vacation than planning their lives.

## **Preparation**

Confidence comes from preparation, which is nothing but planning and practicing. Winners put pressure on themselves. That is the pressure of preparing and not worrying about winning.

If we practice poorly, we play poorly; because we play as we practice. The difference between success and failure is the difference between doing exactly right and almost right.

A complete mental and physical preparation is the result of sacrifice and self-discipline. It is easy to be average but tough to be the best. No wonder the average people take the easy way.

Preparation is the necessary edge to succeed in any field.

Purpose + Principle + Planning + Practice + Perseverance + Patience + Pride = Preparation

## **Preparation leads to Confidence**

Preparation means tolerating failure but never accepting it. It means having the courage to face defeat without feeling defeated, being disappointed without being discouraged.

Preparation means learning from our mistakes. There is nothing wrong with making mistakes. We all do. A fool is one who makes the same mistake twice. A person who makes a mistake and doesn't correct it, commits a bigger one.

The best way to handle a mistake is to

- ◆ admit it quickly
- ◆ not dwell on it
- ◆ learn from it
- ◆ not repeat it
- ◆ not assign blame or make excuses

Pressure comes from being unprepared. There is no substitute for preparation, practice and hard work. Desire and wishful thinking won't do it. Only preparation will give you the competitive edge.

Pressure can paralyze when a person is not prepared. Just like water gravitates to its own path, success gravitates to those who are prepared. Weak effort gets weak results. Persistence is a name we give to

- ◆ a purpose
- ◆ preparation
- ◆ patience
- ◆ principles
- ◆ positive attitude
- ◆ a plan .
- ◆ price .
- ◆ practice
- ◆ pride

#### **Ask yourself:**

- ◆ Do you have a clearly defined purpose?
- ◆ Do you have a plan of action?
- ◆ What effort are you putting into preparation?
- ◆ What price are you willing to pay? How far are you willing to go?
- ◆ Do you have the patience to withstand the gestation period?
- ◆ Are you willing to practice toward excellence?
- ◆ Do you have any firm principles to stand on?
- ◆ Do you have pride in your performance?
- ◆ Do you have the "can do" attitude?

#### **10. Rationalizing**

Winners may analyze but never rationalize that is a loser's game. Losers always have a book full of excuses to tell you why they could not.

We hear excuses like:

I'm unlucky.

I'm born under the wrong stars.

I'm too young.

I'm too old.

I'm handicapped.

I'm not smart enough.

I'm not educated.

I'm not good looking.

I don't have contacts.

I don't have enough money.

I don't have enough time.

The economy is bad.  
If only I had the opportunity.  
If only I didn't have a family.  
If only I had married right.  
The list can go on and on.

### **HOW THEY CATCH MONKEYS IN INDIA**

*Monkey-hunters use a box with an opening at the top, big enough for the monkey to slide its hand in. Inside the box are nuts. The monkey grabs the nuts and now its hand becomes a fist. The monkey tries to get its hand out but the opening is big enough for the hand to slide in, but too small for the fist to come out. Now the monkey has a choice, either to let go off the nuts and be free forever or hang on to the nuts and get caught. Guess what it picks every time? You guessed it. He hangs on to the nuts and gets caught.*

We are no different from monkeys. We all hang on to some nuts that keep us from going forward in life. We keep rationalizing by saying, "I cannot do this because . . ." and whatever comes after "because" are the nuts that we are hanging on to which are holding us back.

Successful people don't rationalize. Two things determine if a person will be a success: reasons and results. Reasons don't count while results do. A good advice for failure is: Don't think, don't ask and don't listen. Just rationalize.

### **11. Not Learning from Past Mistakes**

People who do not learn lessons from history are doomed. Failure is a teacher if we have the right attitude. Failure is a detour, not a dead end. It is a delay, not a defeat. Experience is the name we give to our mistakes.

Some people live and learn, and some only live. Wise people learn from their mistakes wiser people learn from other people's mistakes. Our lives are not long enough to learn only from our own mistakes.

## **12. Inability to Recognize Opportunity**

Opportunities come disguised as obstacles. That is why most people don't recognize them. Remember that the bigger the obstacle, the bigger is the opportunity.

## **13. Fear**

Fear can be real or imaginary. It makes people do strange things and primarily comes because of a lack of understanding. To live in fear is like being in an emotional prison.

Fear results in insecurity, lack of confidence, procrastination. Fear destroys our potential and ability. We cannot think straight. It ruins relationships and health.

Some of the common fears are:

- ◆ fear of failing
- ◆ fear of the unknown
- ◆ fear of being unprepared
- ◆ fear of making the wrong decision
- ◆ fear of rejection

Some fears can be described, others felt. Fear leads to anxiety, which in turn leads to irrational thinking, which actually sabotages our solution to the problem. The normal response to fear is escape. Escape puts us in our comfort zone and reduces the impact temporarily, while keeping the cause. Imaginary fear magnifies the problem. Fear can get out of hand and destroy happiness and relationships.

Fear of failure often can be worse than failure itself. Failure is not the worst thing that could happen to someone. People who don't try have failed before attempting. When infants learn to walk, they keep falling; but to them it is not failing so they get up. If they got disheartened, they would never walk. It is better to die on one's feet than to live with fear on one's knees.

## **14. Inability to Use Talent**

Albert Einstein said, "I think I used about 25% of my intellectual capacity during my life."

According to William James, human beings use only 10-12% of their potential.

The saddest part of most people's lives is that they die with the music still in them. They haven't lived while alive. They rust out rather than wear out. I would rather wear out than rust out. The saddest words in life are "I should have".

Rusting out is not to be confused with patience. Rusting out is idleness and passivity.

Patience is a conscious decision, it is active and involves perseverance and persistence.

Someone asked an elderly person, "What is life's heaviest burden?" The elderly person replied sadly, "To have nothing to carry."

## **15. Lack of Discipline**

Have you ever wondered why some people never reach their goals? Why they are always frustrated with reversals and crises? Why is it some people have continued success, while others have endless failures? Anyone who has accomplished anything worthwhile has never done so without discipline, whether in sports, athletics, academia or business.

People without discipline try to do everything, but commit themselves to nothing. Some so-called liberal thinkers have interpreted lack of discipline as freedom. When I am in an aircraft I want a pilot who is disciplined and does what he is supposed to do and not what he feels like doing. I don't want him to have the philosophy, "I'm free. I don't want anyone from the

\* William James, MDRT Timeless Treasure, The Whole Person, p. 162.

control tower telling me what to do."

Lack of consistency is poor discipline. Discipline takes self-control, sacrifice, and avoiding distractions and temptations. It means staying focused. Steam does not move the engine unless it is confined. Niagara Falls would not generate power unless it were harnessed.

*We all know the story of the tortoise and the hare. The hare used to brag about his speed and challenged the tortoise to a race. The tortoise accepted the challenge. They appointed the fox as the judge who gave them the starting and finishing points. The race started and the tortoise kept going steadily. The hare ran quickly, left the tortoise behind and decided to take a nap since he was so confident he would win the race. By the time he woke up, remembered the race and started running, he saw that the tortoise had already reached the finish line and won.*

Consistency takes discipline and is more important than erratic effort.

Discipline and regret are both painful. Most people have a choice between the two. Guess which is more painful.

Generally children brought up with excessive freedom and a lack of discipline grow up not respecting themselves, their parents or society, and have a hard time accepting responsibility.

## **16. Poor self-esteem**

Poor self-esteem is a lack of self-respect and self-worth. It leads to abuse of one's self and others. Ego takes the driver's seat. Decisions are taken more to satisfy the ego than to accomplish anything worthwhile. People with low self-esteem are constantly looking for identity. They are trying to find themselves. One's self is not to be found but to be created.

Idleness and laziness are consequences of poor self esteem and so is making excuses. Idleness is like rust that eats into the most brilliant metal.

## **17. Lack of Knowledge**

The first step towards knowledge is awareness of areas of ignorance. The more knowledge a person gets, the more he realizes what areas he is ignorant in. A person who thinks he knows everything has the most to learn.

Ignorant people don't know they are ignorant. They don't know that they don't know. In fact more than ignorance, the bigger problem is the illusion of knowledge, which can mislead a person.

## **18. Fatalistic Attitude**

A fatalistic attitude prevents people from accepting responsibility for their position in life. They attribute success and failure to luck. They resign themselves to their fate. They believe and accept the predestined future written in their horoscope or stars, that regardless of their effort whatever has to happen will happen. Hence they never put in

any effort and complacency becomes a way of life. They wait for things to happen rather than make them happen. Success is a matter of luck, and any failure. Weak-minded people fall easy prey to fortune-tellers, horoscopes and self-proclaimed God's men who are sometimes conmen. They become superstitious and ritualistic. Shallow people believe in luck. People with strength and determination believe in cause and effect. Some people consider a rabbit's foot lucky; but it wasn't lucky for the rabbit, was it?

## ***Some People Think They are Just Unlucky***

This breeds a fatalistic attitude. People who get involved halfheartedly say things like:

- ◆ "I will give it a try";
- ◆ "I will see if it works";
- ◆ "I will give it a shot";
- ◆ "I have nothing to lose";
- ◆ "I haven't put much into it anyway."

These people guarantee failure because they get into a project with no dedication or determination. They lack courage, commitment and confidence. They are starting with complacency and call themselves unlucky.

A man bought a racehorse and put him in a barn with a big sign, "The fastest horse in the world." The owner didn't exercise the horse nor train it to keep it in good shape. He entered the horse in a race and it came last. The owner quickly changed the sign to "The fastest world for the horse." By inaction or not doing what should be done, people fail and they blame luck.

### ***Effort Does it***

Life without vision, courage and depth is simply a blind experience. Small, lazy, and weak minds always take the easiest way, the path of least resistance.

Athletes train 15 years for 15 seconds of performance. Ask them if they got lucky. Ask an athlete how he feels after a good workout. He will tell you that he feels spent. If he doesn't feel that way, it means he hasn't worked out to his maximum ability.

Losers think life is unfair. They think only of their bad breaks. They don't consider that the person who is prepared and playing well still got the same bad breaks but overcame them. That is the difference. His threshold for tolerating pain becomes higher because in the end he is not training so much for the game but for his character.

### ***LUCK FAVORS THOSE WHO HELP THEMSELVES***

*A flood was threatening a small town and everyone was leaving for safety except one man who said, "God will save me. I have faith." As the water level rose a jeep came to rescue him, the man refused, saying "God will save me. I have faith." As the water level rose further, he went up to the second storey, and a boat came to help him. Again he refused to go, Belying, "God will save me. I have faith." The water kept rising and the man climbed on to the roof. A helicopter came to rescue him, but he said, "God will save me. I have faith." Well, finally he drowned. When he reached his Maker he angrily questioned, "I had complete faith in you. Why did you ignore my prayers and let me drown?" The Lord replied, "Who do you think sent you the jeep, the boat, and the helicopter?"*

The only way to overcome the fatalistic attitude is to accept responsibility and believe in the law of cause and effect rather than luck. It takes action, preparation and planning rather than waiting, wondering or wishing, to accomplish anything in life.

## ***Luck Shines on the Deserving***

*Alexander Graham Bell was desperately trying to invent a hearing aid for his partially deaf wife. He failed at inventing a hearing aid but in the process discovered the principles of the telephone. You wouldn't call someone like that lucky, would you? Good luck is when opportunity meets preparation. Without effort and preparation, lucky coincidences don't happen.*

### **LUCK**

*He worked by day  
And toiled by night.  
He gave up play  
And some delight.  
Dry books he read,  
New things to learn.  
And forged ahead,  
Success to earn.  
He plodded on with  
Faith and pluck;  
And when he won,  
Men called it luck.*

*--Anonymous*

## **19. Lack of Purpose**

If we read stories of people who overcame serious disabilities, it becomes evident that their burning desire to succeed was their driving force. They had a purpose in life. They wanted to prove to themselves that they could do it in spite of all odds--and they did.

Desire is what made a paralytic Wilma Rudolph the fastest woman on the track at the 1960 Olympics, winning three gold medals.

According to Glen Cunningham, "Desire is what made a boy with burnt legs set the world record in the one mile run."

A polio victim at the age of five started swimming to regain strength. It was because of her desire to succeed that she went on to become a world record holder at three events and won the gold at the 1956 Olympics at Melbourne. Her name is Shelley Mann.

When people lack purpose and direction, they see no opportunity. If a person has the desire to accomplish something, the direction to know his objective, the dedication to stay focused, and the discipline required to put in the hard work, then other things come easy. But if you don't have them, it doesn't matter what else you have.

Character is the foundation upon which all else is built. It endures.

## **20. Lack of Courage**



Successful people are not looking for miracles or easy tasks. They seek courage and strength to overcome obstacles. They look at what is left rather than what is lost. Wishes don't come true; beliefs and expectations supported by conviction do. Prayers are only answered when they are supported with courageous action. It is courage and character that is the deadly combination for success. This is the difference between the ordinary and the extraordinary.

When our minds are filled with courage we forget our fears and overcome obstacles. Courage is not absence of fear but the overcoming of fear. Character (justice and integrity) without courage is ineffective, whereas courage without character is oppression.

### **A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS**

Success is like baking a cake. Unless you have just the right recipe, it is not going to work. The ingredients must be of the finest quality and in the right proportions. You can't overtake it or undercook it. Once you have the right recipe and with practice and the occasional disaster, it becomes a lot easier.

What is the difference between persistence and obstinacy? The difference is that persistence represents a strong will and obstinacy represents a strong won't.

You have the recipe. To use it is your choice.

### **A CRASH COURSE FOR SUCCESS**

- ◆ Play to win and not to lose.
- ◆ Learn from other people's mistakes.
- ◆ Associate with people of high moral character.
- ◆ Give more than you get.
- ◆ Don't look for something for nothing.
- ◆ Always think long term.
- ◆ Evaluate your strengths and build on them.
- ◆ Always keep the larger picture in mind when making a decision.
- ◆ Never compromise your integrity.

## **ACTION PLAN**

1. Come up with three suggestions how you can do your job better, faster, and more effectively:

(a)

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(b)

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(c)

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2. Write down three ways you can use the success principles in each area of your life:

(a) Work

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(b) Home

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(a) Socially

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3. List the areas in your life where lack of discipline is hurting you. Estimate its cost to you.

4. The next time you meet with adversity, stop and ask yourself these two questions:  
What can I learn from this challenge? How can I turn this lesson in life to my advantage?

5. Write your definition of success.