



The **7**
Critical
Steps to

SUCCESS

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INTRODUCTION

If you define "success" by what we see in the movies and on television, your model probably includes lots of cash, mansions, expensive cars, and gorgeous men and women. A great fantasy, but not the model we'll be discussing here. Sorry.

There is a television show that hints at a more interesting, more realistic model of success.

Have you ever seen Shark Tank? It's a very entertaining weekly television show on which five "Sharks" who are multi-millionaires or billionaires decide which entrepreneurs they will fund. All of the Sharks love to make money and are not shy about saying so.

An interesting thing to watch, though, is the criteria the Sharks use to choose which entrepreneurs they will support. It's not enough that their products will make money. It often comes down to whether the Sharks have a passion for the product because, while they are not concerned about their monetary investment in the product - they are fairly sure it will make money, they are very concerned about how they invest their time. This tells you a great deal about how these extremely successful people define "success."

If you've picked up this ebook, you must have some questions about how to be successful. Maybe your first two are

- How can I be successful?
- How can I make money?

We all want to make money -- there's nothing wrong with that. At all! But most successful people will tell you that there's more to success than making money. In fact, a lot of wealthy people think that making money is the easy part!

In all honesty, successful people have often cut out everything but reaching their business/monetary goals for a time, but later included other areas like a social life and family so that they could live full, satisfying lives.

This ebook will show you seven critical steps to being successful, not just with making money but with your life. Many of the qualities you need to be financially successful are the same ones you need to live a more fulfilling life.

SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is at the root of more success stories and more failures than any other personality trait. Why is self-esteem so important? Because it controls the results of everything you do. It's always with you, and it can be your strongest supporter or greatest enemy. You will operate at the level of your self-esteem.

If you think you deserve something and your self-esteem is at a level for you to get it, your self-esteem will unconsciously help you achieve what you want by guiding you in every action you take. But if your self-esteem is at a level where you cannot see yourself achieving something, it will make sure that you don't achieve it. No matter how hard you try.

Research has shown this many times. That's why taking care of your self-esteem is one of the most important things you can do to be successful. Luckily, if you didn't happen to grow up with strong self-esteem, as an adult you can raise your self-esteem or even create it.

One way to raise your self-esteem is to take an honest look at yourself – your good points and your bad points. This works because it's been found that most people with low self-esteem have an inaccurate picture of themselves – a picture that causes them to see themselves as lacking and potentially failing.

In order to be successful, you must see yourself as successfully turning challenges into opportunities and you must trust your ability to enhance your life in positive ways. When you feel this way about yourself, it will show up in every area of your life.

This is not just a philosophical idea; studies have shown that our level of self-esteem actually creates our body and brain chemistry. Good self-esteem comes from three sources:

- Hearing good things about yourself.
- Thinking good things about yourself.
- Doing things that make you proud of yourself.

Once you know that practicing these things will raise your self-esteem, it's really not that hard to, is it? For instance, saying affirmations about yourself to yourself really works, provided they are true. And don't you know from your own experience how good it feels to do something positive for someone else?

Every thought that you say to yourself is programming your brain. Studies have shown that as much as 87% of what people say to themselves is negative. But you can consciously train yourself to resist negative thinking and replace negative thoughts with positive ones. This is completely within your control, so be sure that your self talk builds you up rather than tears you down.

Every morning when you get up decide that this will be a day when you build your self-esteem with positive self talk. This will affect everything else that you do each day.

Avoid negative situations such as unhealthy or bad habits, arguing, hurting someone else, or failing to take positive action when you have a chance to. All of these things diminish good self-esteem. Instead, be good to yourself, treat yourself with respect, and treat other people with respect. Tell the truth; be honest with yourself and others. This creates high self-esteem, while negative things like lying or taking advantage of other people create low self-esteem.

Build other people up because when you do that, it's a cue to your self-esteem to build you up to. Every negative thing you do to yourself or others brings your self-esteem down, while every positive thing you do to yourself or others brings your self-esteem up.

Most people don't understand the direct relationship between self-esteem and success. Now that you understand it, make the right choices to keep your self-esteem high.

RESPONSIBILITY

In the end, each one of us is the sum total of all his actions. When you look back on your life, what you did every day brought you to where you are now; what you will do every day from now on will determine your future. The better you are at taking responsibility for that fact, the more successful you will be.

Taking responsibility for everything in your life is the difference between managing your life and being a victim. Have you ever known someone who blames other people or fate whenever something goes wrong? I'll bet that that person isn't very successful, right? There's a saying, "You can't be a victim and a victor." This is absolutely true. There's no way around it. Either you take charge, take action, and then take responsibility for the results, or you take what's left to you as a victim.

What's holding you back from achieving more success? Do you feel like you're in control of your destiny? Could it be that your fears are getting in your way? Studies have shown that 60% of our fears are totally without basis; 20% are about past experiences and so are out of our control; another 10% are just petty distractions. That leaves 10%, and only 4% to 5% of those are really justified. And of that 4% to 5%, we can only do something about 2%. So the logical thing for each one of us to do is to get to work on that 2%!

Taking responsibility means planning your activity and taking action. Here are some areas to do that in:

- Control your time - Don't let it control you and don't waste it. Plan what you're going to do with your day and do it. Things will come up, but don't let them destroy your day.
- Control your thoughts – As we discussed in the self esteem chapter, managing your thoughts so that they are positive is one of the most important things you can do to be successful.
- Choose the people you spend time with – You can't change all the people you work with or even live with, but you can manage the amount of time you spend with each one, and you can choose to include more positive people whom you can learn from in your life.
- Control your commitments – Commit your energy and your time only to positive people, projects, and goals. It's easy to get caught up in things that are not producing positive results for you, but that leads to you being a victim not a victor.

Taking responsibility is your path to becoming successful. The alternative is to be a victim who has to rely on what others leave you.

PURPOSE/GOALS

Why do you suppose that so many people never achieve their goals in life? The answer, unfortunately, is that they never set them. It's so true -- to the extent that only one in five Americans reach the age of 65 without having to depend on Social Security, and that includes people in supposedly high-paying professions like doctors and lawyers.

Most people don't plan for the future at all. They work during the week and spend what they earned on the weekends. They waste their money, energy, and time.

That's a great waste of a powerful, natural resource, the human mind. Did you know that once we set a target or goal, our mind becomes an automatic system that monitors feedback regarding that target? According to Dr. Maxwell Maltz in *Psycho Cybernetics*, once you set a goal, your mind adjusts your course depending on any new data it gets. It makes corrections so that you can stay on target. The more specific the goal is, the better the corrections are. Furthermore, our brains can't tell the difference between an event that really took place and one that was vividly imagined. So, if you clearly and firmly set a goal, to your brain it is as if the goal has already been achieved.

Goal Setting

Take the time now to write a goal statement. Write it in the first person, using pronouns like “I,” “my,” “mine,” and “me.” Keep your goal statements short and to the point. Be emphatic. Be positive. For instance, “I am raising my self-esteem with positive statements and positive actions today.”

Remember, the more specific you make your goals, the better your chance to achieve them. These techniques may be helpful to you:

- Set short range goals that will build toward your long-range goals. Start with short time periods, such as a week or a month and then build your long-term goals for six months, one year, or five years. When you use a specific timeframe, it helps you measure your success.
- Set goals that inspire you, but that are also realistic and achievable. Set a series of goals so that you are going step-by-step. That way, it is easier to adjust them as needed. Along the way, it also inspires confidence in you as you keep reaching your goals.
- Share your goals with an individual or group who might have similar goals. It's great reinforcement.
- Celebrate achievement of your goals with rewards. It could be a small reward at each step along the way or a bigger reward like a trip or a dinner when you've achieved milestones.
- Keep your goals somewhere where you can access them easily. Don't write them and put them away somewhere since out of sight usually means out of mind.

- Guard your goals. Don't share them with negative people who probably won't encourage you. Share them with positive people who wish you well.

Now that you know what a powerful tool goal setting is, why don't you start making use of it today? It's a powerful but easy way to help you achieve the success you want.

FAITH/OPTIMISM

Your faith can either unlock the door to success for you or keep you from ever experiencing it. It can be a positive power by which you realize the things you dream of, or it can be a negative power which causes you to live in despair.

The faith we're talking about here is not religious or even spiritual; it is a belief or outlook on life, you might call it optimism. This faith exists in the mind-body connection and is the type that leads ordinary people to lift a car when someone is trapped underneath it or to perform other impossible feats of strength in an emergency.

The mind-body connection is real. For instance, when we're anxious and worried, we put stress on our bodies. This activates hormones so that our immune system is compromised and our resistance to disease is lowered. We become more vulnerable to bacteria, viruses, and other environmental hazards. Have you ever noticed that when you're going through an emotional upheaval, you catch a cold? This is not uncommon.

We can use this mind-body connection in a positive way to help us become successful. By becoming tough-minded optimists, we will use our intelligence and our energy to impel us toward success.

Use these techniques to build your optimism:

- Tough-minded optimism combines realism and faith – first, you take a realistic look at the situation. Then you analyze the possible results. Finally, you work toward the most optimistic result.
- Guard against depression – you have the ability to change your thoughts and change your feelings by what you focus on. If you find yourself becoming pessimistic or depressed, ask yourself why and change your focus. One thing you could do is to help somebody else. Volunteering doesn't just help others; it helps your own self-esteem and attitude.
- Do something you enjoy – whether it's listening to music, or reading a book, or going to a movie, take the time to reward yourself. You deserve it, and it's important to you mentally, emotionally, and physically.
- Pay attention to your vocabulary – do you use a lot of negative words or words that make you seem like a victim? Change them to positive words. Be the victor not the victim.
- Be a lifelong learner – the world is full of new things to learn, and learning will keep you inspired and positive.
- Take care of your health – it's much harder to be successful at anything when you're not healthy. Eat well, exercise, and take some time every day to relax.

ADAPTABILITY

Did you know that the ancient Chinese symbol for "crisis" is exactly the same as the symbol for "opportunity?" Seeing problems as opportunities is the best possible way to be successful in business and in life. It's a matter of perspective, so shouldn't you adopt the perspective that will lead to success and not failure?

Problems, change, stress – they're all part of everyone's life, no one is exempt. Adaptability means seeing these things as normal. Successful people develop a mental toughness which causes them to see adversities and failures as ways to learn lessons and improve. They expect challenges so, even before the challenges occur, they have the intention of facing them and finding solutions.

Basically, there are two ways to adapt to situations: the first is to adapt ourselves to situations that are beyond our control, and the second is to adapt situations so that they are better for us. One of these two options provides the solution to most problems, so, of course, you want to adapt either yourself or the situation in the most productive, worthwhile, way.

Adaptability is a choice. It's you making up your mind to be flexible, responsive, analytical, and solution oriented. Choosing to be adaptive, instead of fighting the issue means that you're giving yourself freedom to take action

to find a solution. Choosing to be adaptive means you the victor and not the victim. How adaptable are you?

Here are some techniques to help you increase your adaptive skills:

1. How's your sense of humor? It can be a great ally for you. One of the things humor helps you do is to get some perspective on yourself and your situation. Humor can help you see the fun in the situation when you make a mistake. It can make it easier for you to learn from your mistake.

2. How well do you control your negative emotions? Negative emotions can get you into a lot of trouble. When you're in a stressful situation, try to remove yourself until you have your emotions under control. When you're calmer, deal with the situation.

3. Do you see change as normal or does it throw you for a loop? Evaluate the way you react to unexpected events. Make a conscious effort to take changes in stride. This is a skill you can learn, and it will help you in many different ways.

4. How good are you at saying "No"? If you're stressed because you've overcommitted yourself, it's harder to adapt to situations as they arise. Make your schedule work for you, not against you. Learn to say "No," calmly and firmly, when you need to.

5. Is your life way too complicated? Learn to simplify your life. Get rid of clutter and distractions that wear you out and get in the way. Decide what's essential to you and what you really want to do with your time, and concentrate on that.

PERSEVERANCE

Press on: nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful individuals with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.
– Calvin Coolidge

Perseverance means giving everything you have to whatever you're doing at the time you're doing it. It means doing the tough things and going the extra mile. It means hard work. Perseverance isn't a glamorous word; it's kind of old-fashioned. But very few people are successful without it. How well do you persevere? Answer these questions to get a better idea:

1. Do you complete what you start? Always? Sometimes? Never?
2. Are you discouraged easily? What happens then? Do you quit? Or do you fight back?
3. Do other people see you as an action taker?
4. Do you view opportunities as being behind you or ahead of you? Take a minute to write down exactly what opportunities you see for yourself now.
5. Do you change problems into opportunities?

Keep these techniques in mind to help you become more persevering:

- Tackle high-priority work first. Often people do low priority work because it is easier. They're putting off the harder tasks. Set your priorities every day based on the things you must complete, and stick to your action plan.
- If you fail at something, try again. Get some feedback on why you're failing. If it's something you should be doing, try again. If for some reason, it's not a task you should be doing at this time, put it aside, at least for now.
- If you feel you've reached an impasse with a problem, take a break. Change what you're doing or change your mood. Go back to it with a new perspective.
- Cultivate relationships with individuals who have goals similar to yours. These people can be inspirational, and they can help you persevere when things get rocky.
- Approach problems with honesty and logic. Any other approach makes the problem more difficult and makes it harder to persevere.
- Aim for excellence. Make excellence a habit. Having confidence in your performance makes it easier to persevere.

INTEGRITY

Why is integrity so important? Without integrity, you don't have self respect. Without self respect, you don't have self-esteem. We learned at the beginning of this ebook that your level of self-esteem can lead to your success or failure.

Integrity might be less popular than ever these days since we are all being bombarded by the media with so many types of superficiality. Appearances seem to be everything; the emphasis is on the external. The big problem with that is there are no values except for external success and external success without internal success will not sustain you. Here are some points to test your integrity level:

1. People who know me trust me to follow through on things.
2. I'm seen as a loyal, dependable friend.
3. I treat other people. The way I'd like to be treated.
4. I don't take advantage of my expense account.
5. If my spouse is as faithful as I am, I'm satisfied.

In order to have integrity, you need to know who you are at the deepest level and what you want. If you don't know these things, you can't be true to yourself. If you can't be true to yourself, you won't have integrity. Ask yourself these questions:

- How do I want to live my life?

- What do I want to do for a living?
- What will bring meaning and fulfillment into my life?

If you feel you could have more integrity than you do right now, here are some steps you can take to increase it:

1. Be honest with yourself and others.
2. When you make decisions, ask yourself, "Is this is the honest thing to do? How will it affect other people involved?"
3. Model yourself after people you admire for their integrity.
4. Speak with honesty and, even more important, act with honesty.

Integrity not only builds your self-esteem, it builds your reputation – how others see you. How others see you is critical to your success.

CONCLUSION

In this poem, Ralph Waldo Emerson defines success as well as anyone can:

How do you measure success?

To laugh often and much;

To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children:

To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;

To appreciate beauty;

To find the best in others;

To leave the world a bit better,
whether by a healthy child, a garden patch,
a redeemed social condition, or a job well done;

To know even one other life has breathed easier
because you have lived –

This is to have succeeded.

I wish you every success.

BONUS: 24 GREAT SUCCESS QUOTATIONS

These twenty-four opinions about success offer us some variety, some consistency, some humor, and so much real wisdom. Enjoy!

1. Vacillating people seldom succeed. They seldom win the solid respect of their fellows. Successful men and women are very careful in reaching decisions, and very persistent and determined in action thereafter. – LG Elliott

2. Many of the most successful men I have known have never grown up. They have retained bubbling-over boyishness. They have relished wit, they have indulged in humor. They have not allowed “dignity” to depress them into moroseness. Youthfulness of spirit is the twin brother of optimism, and optimism is the stuff of which American business success is fashioned. Resist growing up! – BC Forbes.

3. I'd rather be a failure at something I love than a success at something I hate. – George Burns.

4. We would accomplish many more things if we did not think of them as impossible. – C Malesherbez.

5. We are at our very best, and we are happiest, when we are fully engaged in work we enjoy on the journey toward

the goal we've established for ourselves. It gives meaning to our time off and comfort to our sleep. It makes everything else in life so wonderful, so worthwhile. – Earl Nightingale

6. Thirteen virtues necessary for true success: temperance, silence, order, resolution, frugality, industry, sincerity, justice, moderation, cleanliness, tranquility, chastity, and humility. – Benjamin Franklin

7. Success follows doing what you want to do. There is no other way to be successful. – Malcolm Forbes.

8. To bring oneself to a frame of mind and to the proper energy to accomplish things that require plain hard work continuously is the one big battle that everyone has. When this battle is won for all time, then everything is easy. – Thomas a Buckner

9. A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds. – Francis Bacon

10. There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, learning from failure. – Gen. Colin L Powell.

11. Enthusiasm for one's goal lessens the disagreeableness of working toward it. – Thomas Eakins

12. Always bear in mind that your own resolution to success is more important than any other one thing. – Abraham Lincoln

13. Many people have the ambition to succeed; they may even have a special aptitude for their job. And yet they do not move ahead. Why? Perhaps they think that since they can master the job, there is no need to master themselves. – John Stevenson

14. A first-rate soup is better than a second-rate painting. – Abraham Maslow

15. If you have the will to win, you have achieved half your success; if you don't, you have achieved half your failure. – David VA Ambrose.

16. Four steps to achievement: plan purposefully, prepare prayerfully, proceed positively, pursue persistently. – William a Ward

17. There is only one success – to be able to spend your life in your own way. – Christopher Morley

18. Success is living up to your potential. That's all. Wake up with a smile and go after life... Live it, enjoy, tasty, smell it, feel it. – Joe Kapp

19. How can they say my life is not a success? Have I not for more than sixty years got enough to eat and escaped being eaten? – Logan Pearsall Smith.

20. The art of dealing with people is the foremost secret of successful men. A man's success in handling people is the very yardstick by which the outcome of his whole life's work is measured. – Paul C Packe

21. Put your heart, mind, intellect and soul even to your smallest acts. This is the secret of success. – Swami Sivananda

22. Flaming enthusiasm, backed up by horse sense and persistence, is the quality that most frequently makes for success. – Dell Carnegie.

23. Life is a succession of moments. To live each one is to succeed. – Corita Kent.

24. Three outstanding qualities make for success: judgment, industry, health. And the greatest of these is judgment. – William Maxwell Aitken, Lord Beaverbrook.