



Portrait of a person destined for success

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For decades, in fact even since before 1900, people have been studying what makes for success. Success in the long run, that is. Success in the short-term can be attained through many factors, including superficial actions as well as illegal activity. Success in the long-term, which many see as the hallmark of success, is however what we are interested in.

So what are some of the critical factors that lead to success for a person, a team, a business, a community, or any other entity for that matter.

A person destined for success is one who:

1. **Takes responsibility.**

This sounds easy to do. It is not. If you are working with someone you know is a person who does not follow through or follow up, it means taking responsibility for knowing that fact. Which means taking actions yourself, to ensure you deal with that person's inefficiencies. If you need something done, then you need to take responsibility for making sure what you need done, gets done in the timeframe you want it done.

It does not mean taking responsibility for someone else. You can only be responsible for your own behaviour. So, don't blame yourself for what others do. However, use your knowledge of how people are, and how things work, to create a plan that will help you get the results you want.

2. **Constantly engages in personal development.**

In order to succeed, you have to work on who you are as a person. You will never rise higher than your own level of personal development. People who are successful put a lot of work into growing and developing themselves. Your personal qualities, your interpersonal skills, and your thinking abilities will determine how high you can rise. They set the limitation on what you can do. If you want to overcome your limitations, then work on yourself. All the time. If you want to succeed at the endeavours you undertake, you need to commit to constant personal growth.

3. **Doesn't give up.**

Commitment and perseverance are the major part of what makes people successful. You simply cannot give up unless you believe that what you are doing is wrong for you. If you are struggling, even if you have been battling for a long time, if you feel that what you are doing is right for you, right for others, and right for the world, keep on. Everything of significance takes time to achieve. No one has an easy, straightforward ride to the top. The path to the top is full of failures, disappointments, and heartbreaks. It is for everyone. You just have to keep on keeping on. I work quite a lot with entrepreneurs starting their own business. The criteria that eventually gets people to own a successful business is that they simply don't give up. Every entrepreneur I have come across, every three months or so, wonders if they should give up their business dream and get a job. Everyone. The difference between those who are still running their own businesses and those who gave up, is those who are still running a business don't start looking for a job. They keep on, keeping on with their business. They just keep on going, even though it is hard.

4. **Learns as much as they can about their field and then even more to have an edge.**

To be successful in the long-term you can't wing it. You need to be an expert. And if you are not an expert, you need to be building the knowledge, the skills, the experience, and the reputation to ultimately be an expert. No one who is successful lacks knowledge about the area in which they operate. This also means sometimes learning a few things which may seem on the sidelines, in order to position yourself as uniquely expert. If you have a medical practice or are a musician, your business will go a lot better if you learn about running a business and marketing yourself. When the Springboks won the world cup in 2007, it was the first time the rugby team had an expert vision coach in Sherylle Calder. Her job is to train teams to improve their skills, awareness, and decision-making. Who would have thought a sports team would need that? Think out of the box and look at supplementary skills to make you stand out if you want to be a success. If you want sustained success, you learn your craft well, and you learn additional knowledge and skills which will make you stand out just that little bit more.

5. **Associates with the right people**

I have spoken about this many times; the people you surround yourself with have a huge impact on your life. Whether we like it or not, we absorb the knowledge and energy of the people around us. If people are around us a lot, then we are strongly influenced by them. You need to discipline yourself to proactively make sure you spend time with people that are in support of your journey and help you achieve your endeavours, even if it's just moral support. On a regular basis, make a list of who you spend a lot of time with, and decide who you need to spend less time with, and who you need to spend more time with. And perhaps, you even need to go out and meet more of the right kind of people.

6. **Does what they are passionate about**

If you have read this far (and if you have, I hope you have learned some things), you will realise that if you want to be successful you need to put time and effort into what you do. You also need to keep at it. If you are doing something you don't really like, or that does not excite you, it is going to be extraordinarily difficult to put in the required work. It will be so hard that you will stop. So, do what you are passionate about. It is the only way in which you will keep going and be motivated and committed to do what is necessary to be successful. Usually when we are passionate about something we are good at it, or we work at it until we are good at it, and we exude excitement and positivity which attracts people to us, facilitating the achievement of success.

7. **Is a nice person**

You may have some different thoughts about this. You may be thinking about a whole host of people who are not really nice, or don't seem nice, who could be thought of as successful. Remember success is in the long run. And this is not about notoriety. I am not talking about being famous or recognised as a celebrity. I am talking about success. And success means you have added something positive to the world.

I am not talking about being a pushover either. That will not get you success. You need to be confident, have self-belief, and assert yourself. You need to make sure you are respected and at the same time that you treat others with respect. In order to accomplish just about anything in this world we need other people. If you are disliked, disrespected, and disregarded by other people, you will not achieve real and long-lasting success. You cannot. Ultimately everything is achieved through relationships with other people. So – just be a nice person.

Not everyone wants to be successful, and that is okay. Hopefully we live in a time and place where we each get to choose how we want to live our lives. If you do want to be successful, understand that you most probably can. It is a choice you make. It is not something that just happens. If you want to be successful in some field, you almost certainly can be, you just have to learn what is required. Learn from those who have done it before, and then practice daily the habits of success.