

8 Simple Steps to Success: Tips for Finding Fulfillment in Your Life and Your Work

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O P T I O N S
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Set A Course for Success

Don't read this if you are not committed to succeed!

Now that we have separated the wheat from the chaff, let's get down to the kernel of what it takes to be successful in all areas of your life: material, spiritual, your relationships, family, work, and your community.

It takes two things. Planning and effort consistent with your plan.

Think about this. How will you know you have had a great year? The answer, "I'll just know" doesn't cut it. You need to be very specific about what you want to achieve this year. It is called "starting with the end in mind." To build a house you need a plan of what it will look like when it is finished. Then start with the foundation, build the walls, the roof, etc. You'll know you have achieved your goal when the physical reality, the house, matches the picture on the paper - the plan.

A plan and a goal of completion give you both context and a direction to follow. You'll never know you have arrived if you don't know where you're going.

There are two key parts to a plan. Where you are starting from and where you want to end up. Starting with your final destination gives you a point from which to measure your current position in relation to your outcome. You can then direct your attention and efforts to stay on course towards your goal.

When your plan is clear, you can then begin to lay out the specific steps to take you where you want to go.

Start your New Year Plan by thinking of January 1, 2000. What will you have accomplished? It may be helpful to look at different areas of your life: work, family,

relationships, etc.. Set an outcome or goal for each. Then, start to break each outcome down in three month segments, then monthly, weekly, and even daily. Remember, the journey of 1600 km (1,000 miles) begins with the first step and is only achieved with consistent effort.

There are two types of things that can knock you off course.

1) The environment around you -- competition, the market, a snow storm, and
2) your own beliefs about yourself-- your commitment, effort and determination.
You cannot do much about the weather, but your own effort, commitment and beliefs are within your control.

A plan will help keep you focused and on track. If you're concerned with being boxed in by a plan, don't worry. It is a flexible thing. The objective is to help you achieve what you want.

Plan to build your year like you would build your home. Decide what you want then take action aligned with your plan. Whatever it is you want, get the most out of your life this year and take the time to set out a plan.



"If we don't change the direction we're going, we're going to end up where we're headed." -- Chinese Proverb



Destination Success

A few weeks ago I got a phone call from a fellow asking about Success Coaching. He wanted to know if coaching could really help him achieve success.

Experience tells me the answer is "yes." In the 3 1/2 years I have been a professional Success Coach (and the 20 years of study and work experience to get here!), I have found some particularly powerful routes on the Success map. They seem quite straight-forward, though this doesn't mean it's an easy trip. You can have a map and know the path but if you never take the trip, you won't get to the destination.

Here are five routes on the success map, to help you on your journey in business and in life. Your coach's job is to help navigate and work with you to:

1. Know what you want. For some of you this may sound basic. You might say "I want money" or "I want success." However, the key here is to be very specific about what you want. For example, "I want a 20% increase in net profit" vs. "I want higher profits."
2. Have a clear purpose. Know the reason for which something is being done.
3. Understand and use intent. Intent is one of the most underrated aspects of success. Your actions have to be packed with intent -- is your mind concentrated, firmly resolved on a purpose? Out of intent is born will. It's a process of exercising the mind with conscious intention towards initiating a chosen action, i.e., set your goal, see it complete, and go!
4. Establish commitment. This is the action of binding yourself to a course of action. Dedication is part of this. You may not know what to do but if you are committed to being successful, you'll find out how!

5. Clearly articulate how your service, product, or experience will benefit you, others, the world. I call this "knowing your story." Until you really know your story, it is difficult to enroll others. It doesn't matter what you are presenting: financial services, healthcare, cars, or software. You need to convincingly express the value of what you do.

It doesn't matter what area of life you choose. Business, family, community, social. If you want to reach the destination of success, this map will help take you there.

Take this self test. Choose a specific context (business, relationships, family, etc.):

"The trained eyes and ears of a good Coach help you see where you are on your journey."

- ⇒ Do you know specifically what you want?
- ⇒ Is there a purpose or reason for doing it?
- ⇒ Is there clear intention of action?
- ⇒ Are you truly committed?
- ⇒ Have you clearly articulated the benefits to yourself and others?

If there's something missing or you find yourself with a flat tire, seem to be driving around in circles, or running out of gas, a Coach may be able to get you back on your road to success.

The trained eyes and ears of a good Coach help you see where you are on your journey. They'll assist you to clarify your direction, layout the route, encourage intentional action, and get over obstacles. Heading out... destination Success.



What If You Couldn't Fail?

Failure is defined as "falling short of hitting the target." What if you couldn't fail? How differently might you approach challenging situations if you knew you could be successful?

To look at "failure" we need to look at two aspects. First, the targets we set and second, our definition of success. For example, I'm a retailer who sets a sales target of 10 widgets. I only sell 9. Am I a failure or did I succeed 9 times and run out of time? To get one sale I may have had to speak to 10 people. If my product did not meet the needs of 9 of these people I spoke to, did I fail? Was each "no" a failure or a stepping stone to success?

Baseball, and especially last year's homerun quest by Mark McGuire and Sammy Sosa is a great example of failure. Both these men swung at the ball and missed it or hit it the wrong way about 100 times more often than they hit it the way they wanted. The average "professional" baseball player who earns \$1 million per year fails to get on base 75% of the time. Seven times out of ten at bats, he walks back to the dugout having been unsuccessful at his job. Or was he? Baseball is a game of statistics and so is life.

If we take one, two, three or ten setbacks as evidence of failure, how would we progress? Thomas Edison is known to have tried to create the electric light bulb more than 10,000 different ways. One of his financial backers is said to have asked, "Tom, why don't you quit? Can't you see this idea of yours is a failure?" Edison's response was, "Every time it did not work I got feedback on how to make it better. I have now eliminated 10,000 ways it does not work and I get closer and closer to success." Every failure moved him toward to his goal.

Thomas Edison, Sammy Sosa, Mark McGuire, all had one thing in common.

They looked at their results as feedback which helped them adjust their actions and move toward greater and greater chances for success. They learned from their mistakes. They took missing the mark as feedback to fine-tune their efforts until the results matched their target.

Many of us are easily dissuaded and discouraged by not succeeding the first time we try something new. The learning experience of "falling short of hitting the target" can bruise the ego. The projected pain of not looking good or feeling inadequate has stopped many efforts to even try to hit the mark.

Why not turn a missed target into a new learning opportunity? Step back from the situation and ask yourself, "What adjustments would bring me closer to my target?" Keep your eye on the ball and keep swinging!

Thank goodness Thomas Edison kept trying and did not quit when he fell short of hitting the target in his early attempts to create the electric light bulb. Otherwise I might have had to write this by candlelight!



Create a Winning Attitude for Success

Water (H₂O) is made up of the basic elements of Hydrogen (H) and Oxygen (O). Each element contributes its own particular characteristics and together, form an integral part of life.

A positive attitude of achievement is also made up of very specific elements. Following are Six Characteristics of a Positive Mental Attitude. They are presented in sequence but it is the simultaneous interaction of them all working together that creates the synergy for a winning attitude and success in just about any endeavor.

Read over this list. Then, follow the exercise at the end.

1. **Set Your Inner Motivation**

Inner motivation happens when you are clearly motivated toward a very specific goal and away from the unpleasant consequences of not achieving it.

2. **The Value of High Standards**

Set your own high standards. Standards where, to you, anything less is unacceptable. Personally dedicate yourself to this level.

3. **Chunk Down Your Goal**

Break down your goal into manageable, bite-size chunks. Two advantages:

- a) You'll focus on small tasks you can and will do.
- b) This also creates a sense of satisfaction in completing each small step towards achievement.

4. **Combine Your Present and Future Time Frames**

Think vividly and fully in the positive future. At the same moment you are concentrating on achieving the task at hand, you can also see the big bright picture of your future accomplishment drawing you forward.

What step can you take right now to reach your

next milestone? Fully experience the present and take action toward the future.

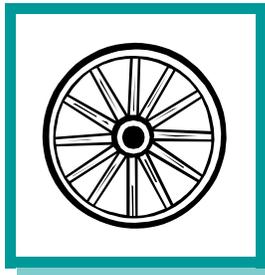
5. **Personal Involvement**

Get involved in your own success. Don't wait for it to happen to you. When you participate, you influence what's going on. It increases your commitment, focuses your intensity, and makes you more determined. Personal involvement leads to owning a bigger stake in your own future.

6. **Self to Self Comparison**

How do you judge your performance? Traditionally we compare ourselves to others, judging success and failure.

Try looking solely at your own progress, comparing yourself to yourself.



What progress have you made since yesterday, since last week, last month, last year? Achievement is about moving from where you were to where you are now and on to where you are going in the future.

These Six Characteristic elements are like spokes on a wheel. Together they support the hub as you roll towards manifesting your dreams, your goals and your future achievements.

Now, try this exercise.

Choose one of your goals. Take it through the Six Characteristics. Do you have both specific outcomes and negative consequences? Have you set a high standard for yourself? Have you chunked it down to manageable steps? Is your visualized future accomplishment presently drawing you toward it? Are you taking action or waiting for it to happen to you? Lighten up! Compare yourself to yourself. Use others as inspiration, not comparison.

Let me know how it works for you!

(This work originally developed by Gary J. Faris, Senior NLP Trainer and Consultant.)



The Secret to a Life of Success and Fulfillment

16th century essayist, Michel Montaigne, wrote, "the great and glorious masterpiece of man is to know how to live to purpose." Though this refers to the personal aspects of our lives, when applied to business, successes often occur when our businesses are also operating on purpose.

We hear and read a lot about mission statements: what we do; and vision statements: what our efforts effect. A Purpose is different. It is the "why" behind what we do. A purpose, personal or business, is our "raison d'être" or "reason for being."

Some say, in business, as in life, when you are not sure which way to go or where to turn, connect back to why you're here, doing what you do ... your purpose. Purpose provides ongoing direction and focus, a clear, solid understanding of what you do in business and in life, why you do it and how it benefits yourself and others.

Insights into the way businesses work and what is necessary for enterprises to last, come back to efforts being in clear alignment with purpose. The same dynamic is true of people. When you know your personal purpose (and everyone has one), you can then consciously align yourself, your interests, and your actions, with what brings meaning, satisfaction and fulfillment to your life.

Great power, motivation and inspiration comes when you align your personal purpose with your business purpose. Work no longer seems like work, rather something fulfilling and of which you want to be a part!

Throughout time the challenge has always been in defining our personal purpose. The oracle at Delphi said, "Know thyself." This is essential for clarifying your personal purpose and, the process requires

introspection.

Here are some specific steps to help you put the pieces of your purpose together.

Step 1

Determine your Core Attributes. These represent the kind of person you are now and usually have been true of you since you were a youngster. Knowing your attributes offers a sense of security of self.

Step 2

Define and acknowledge your unique Natural Gifts. The capabilities, skills and abilities that seem to come naturally to you (hint: you often take your natural gifts for granted because these skills are so easy for you to do). Knowing your natural gifts creates an inner sense of capability.

Step 3

Connect to past experiences where you felt satisfied, on purpose or like you were using all of who you are. Note the similarities in these experiences and how you were actually manifesting your personal purpose. Knowing your purpose gives you a solid sense of the significance of the contribution you make.

Step 4

Notice how your contribution to the world is part of something much bigger than you, how it is connected to a larger Vision or endeavor.

Connecting your personal purpose with what you do for a living is satisfying and liberating. Take the time to "know thyself." When you are living on purpose, you are bound to be successful in business and in life.

"The secret to success is constancy of Purpose."
Benjamin Disraeli



So, What's Your Story?

For most people in business, myself included, we have to keep serving our current customers and at the same time find new prospects we can serve.

Over and over in my success coaching practice, I hear people speak about not having enough of the right kind of customer while others wonder why they aren't getting referrals.

I am no longer surprised when I get a blank look from business owners, sales professionals and managers when I ask them "Do others really know what you do for them and do they know how your service satisfies their needs?"

Of course you know what you do, you know how it will benefit others and you know how you are different from the competition. However, your customer or prospect is the one who needs to be able to make the connection between you, your product or service and a need.

So, how do you let a prospective customer know what you can do for them? You tell a story. A story is a description of an experience. Story telling lies at the heart of human experience and it is a very effective tool for getting your message across to others.

Here is a very simple and effective way to tell your story. It has worked very well for me and for every person I know who uses it. It's called an "attraction story" because it attracts to you only those who need your product or service.

There are two parts to the Attraction Story. You simply need to remember two sentences.

1. "Do you know how..." (then name 2 or 3 problems common among your IDEAL client).

2. "Well, what I do is..." (briefly tell them that your business solves each of these problems).

For example, if you are a business consultant, you might say,

"Do you know how many companies today are concerned about high overhead, cash flow and employee relations?" (They will say yes.)

"Well, what I do is work with companies by implementing systems that reduce overhead, increase cash flow and improve employee relations. I'm a business consultant."

Anyone who has the type of problems you solve will be attracted to what you do. They will naturally want to hear more about you or they may know someone who has these problems and could use help.

These two simple sentences will help you tell your story and open the door to further discussion about what you offer.

Do you know how business professionals often have a difficult time telling others about their service, or they find their current clients are not referring business to them, they get frustrated and don't know what to do?

Well, what I do is help them articulate their story, work with them to educate their clients to refer business, and assist them to move through frustration into action. I'm a Success Coach.

Try it. Email your Attraction Story to me at coach@successoptions.com and I'll give you a FREE email consultation with feedback and tips to create your own powerful Attraction Story.

"Story telling lies at the heart of human experience."



Moving From Manager to Coach

These days it seems the "coaching" word is everywhere. Business owners coach staff, as do managers and supervisors. Parents coach kids for life skills. We're even coaching ourselves. Unfortunately, just because we change the name from "managing" to "coaching" doesn't mean we've developed the new skills required to "coach" successfully.

Good coaching skills can make the difference between getting performance and getting excellence out of your self and your associates.

It is essential as a Coach to know the outcomes you expect. You then need to be able to clearly communicate the outcomes to the person being coached. Identifying your expectations of the end result gives a clear goal. Outcomes can range from setting major career objectives to where and how the incoming mail gets sorted. For successful arrival at your destination, you need to know where you are going.

You then need to assess what resources are necessary to get there. We all need training and that's why you are coaching someone -- to define clearly the skills and strategies necessary to get the desired result. Maybe someone needs to learn to read a map, master a specific computer program, think in the big picture, or develop a smooth phone manner.

Once you know the skill or skills to be developed, implement a plan. Are the resources available? How long will it take to learn? What are the specific steps necessary and by when are you expected to reach the goal?

Joan, a lawyer and assistant general counsel for a large company, was frustrated with one of her assistants. She felt the assistant

was not following through and keeping Joan current on a project's status. Was it complete, was it progressing, or was it stalled?

Joan thought she was a good communicator but realized she was not getting what she wanted. After discussing the problem with her coach, Joan realized she may not have been clear with her assistant. They sat down together and this time Joan knew the precise result she was looking for. She wanted weekly written updates.

Joan coached her assistant to be able to see the "big picture" and how reporting fit in. Then together they came up with a plan for the assistant to implement and scheduled follow up reviews.

After you have set targets, assessed the skill requirements and set out a plan, it's helpful to put your agreements in writing. Depending on the size and breadth of the project, your agreement could have many check points or opportunities for feedback and assessment. Coach for win/win and everyone will be more productive.

In a future article I will discuss the art and science of giving and receiving constructive, non-judgmental, sensory specific feedback. In the meantime, if you have any questions about how to make the transition from manager to coach, please send me an email at coach@successoptions.com.



*"It is essential
as a Coach to
know the
outcomes you
expect."*



From Manager to Coach, Part II - Going Visual

In a previous article we covered the first steps for moving from "manager" to "coach." These skills and tips are as applicable to coaching yourself as they are to coaching others.

We began by clarifying what you want or expect and identifying the specific outcomes to be achieved.

In this article, I will share with you one of the most powerful tools used in coaching. I call it "going visual."

There are two aspects to "going visual."

1) Identifying the specific issue needing to be addressed; and 2) presenting it in a "visual" way.

1) What is the specific coaching issue? Is it coming to work on time ready to go? Is it a skill to be developed like closing the sale, filing a report in a certain way or maybe making a presentation to the board or a customer? Once you have identified the issue or skill, write it down on a pad or on a clipboard. This will help you clearly define what you want and prepare to deal with it in the "visual" way.

2) Going visual. When you get together with the coachee and are getting ready to present the issue, it is helpful to be sitting or standing beside or at 90 to the other person. (We want to be able to move the issue from between you, as in across a desk, to a place where you can both look at it at the same time.)

From this side by side position, lift the pad up (chest height) so you can both see it together. This is "going visual" with the issue. As coach you will both look at and point to the issues (one at a time) as you are

discussing them. You will probably notice the other person look where you are looking. Keep looking at the pad as you discuss it so you both stay focused on the issue.

What this does is take any "charge" out of the issue. You can both look at it and TOGETHER come up with solutions. You can then get commitment to a plan of action. [It's helpful to write down the actions on which you've agreed.] Together, look at the agreement in the same "going visual" way so you both are clear.

This "going visual" approach works if you are negotiating a contract, disputing a bill, giving clear instructions or reviewing

someone's performance. Separating the issues from the relationship by "going visual" is one of the most powerful tools to use in coaching for successful professional development.

A good coach first sets the stage so the coachee feels open enough to let the information in. Getting agreement on the steps to be taken says, "We agree and we're

working on this together." This builds independent responsibility in the coachee to do what he/she says they will do.

If you have any questions about this or want to send any feedback, please send me an email to coach@successoptions.com.

Let's look at this together...

"Going Visual ... one of the most powerful tools used in coaching."





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Robert Knowlton is a Success Coach, Trainer, and Certified NLP Master Practitioner.

Move past challenges toward excellence and success. Coaching in leadership, sales and communication strategies, presentation skills, and discovering your purpose and personal vision. Experience how coaching can assist you to produce the results you want with less effort, less stress, and more enjoyment.

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