



What Makes Up Successful People?!

What are Some Key Areas for successful people in business, leadership, management, teams, procurement, finance, and life?

It has EVERYTHING to do with it! Success in life is like the air that we breathe – without it we die and are mediocre in our own life!

To succeed at work, with teams, developing leaders, with empowering others, meeting goals from those we report to, and having a sustainable and accomplished life requires that we live out success. Success can be broken down by steps, methodologies, scientific processes, and habits. From these building blocks we can build our own successful life.

Please take some time and really let the information below sink in as you review it. Process it. Then, go back and read it again and start applying each area to your life.

Achievement Realized – Scientific Success

The areas below highlight successful and proven ways, processes, steps, and habits that accomplished people utilize in their daily life. They are known as real life success steps/realized achievements, which have been identified by several scientists who have studied successful people in all walks of life.

Each area (a tip, truth, and/or step) is stated as a fact and a suggestion of how you can implement this in your life.

Let Your Speech Be Slow

It is not about the numbers of things you say, but what is understood. Good speakers master speaking more slowly than others.

“People rate speakers who speak more slowly as being 38 percent more knowledgeable than speakers who speak more quickly.”

Peterson, Cannito, and Brown (1995)

Do things In Order

When you are pursuing goals, do them in order. You cannot skip steps to accomplish your goals quicker. Take your goals one at a time and enjoy the process as you move forward. If you do not, you will not move forward.



“Seven out of ten people who are satisfied with their careers express a keen sense of order – an appreciation for the distinct phases of a career and their progression to this point.”

Elliott (1999)

Competence

How good are you at what you do? Do you have tests or periodic evaluations to measure your performance? Understanding where you are at, what you are good at, and what you are not good at is competence.

People who do not think they are good at what they do – who do not think they are capable of success or leadership – do not change their opinion even when they are presented with indicators of success. Instead, their self-doubts overrule evidence to the contrary.

Evaluate yourself on a regular basis – find out what you need to work on – as you work on yourself, you will begin to feel competent, which will make you competent!

“For most people studied, the first step toward improving their job performance had nothing to do with the job itself but instead with improving how they felt about themselves. In fact, for eight in ten people, self-image matters more in how they rate their job performance than does their actual job performance.”

Gribble (two thousand)

Do Not Be Average

Most people want you to be average – resist this at all costs! Do everything the best you can do them. If you do succumb to being average, you risk your goals, your individuality, your unique ideas, and the potential of success locked inside of you.

“Psychologists have observed that unhealthy habits can spread through an office like a contagious disease. Employees tend to mirror the bad behaviors of their co-workers, with factors as diverse as low morale, poor working habits, and theft from the employer all rising based on the negative behavior peers.”

Greene (1999)

Change Is Not Easy

We hear about the possibilities for wonderful changes people can make in their lives, and we want to duplicate those results. When we try and are not quickly rewarded, we wind up feeling worse than we did before we started. Change is possible, but it takes time.



“Research on financial managers finds that 95 percent display a particular commitment to sectors in which they experienced their first success. Ultimately, this tendency leads to missed buying opportunities in other segments of the market and unrealistic enthusiasm for their chosen sector.”

Goltz (1999)

Winners Are Made

Winners are not born – winners are made! Successful people get where they are by following a strategic plan. Winners get ahead by learning what it takes. Winners develop a blueprint and follow it – like building a house from a blueprint.

“Case study research on business executives reveals that 98 percent see their position as the result of plans and strategy and that more than half credit their use of a successful person as an example to help define that plan.”

Gordon (1998)

Act

People need to keep moving forward for their dreams to live. You need to do something everyday to come closer to your dreams.

“Those who do not feel they are taking steps toward their goals are five times more likely to give up and three times less likely to feel satisfied with their lives.”

Elliott (1999)

Find Your Motivation Where You Can Get It

Use what you really care about to make yourself enthusiastic about how things turn out.

“When evaluated in national surveys against such crucial factors as intelligence, ability, and salary, level of motivation proves to be a more significant component in predicting career success. While level of motivation is highly correlated with success, importantly, the source of motivation varies greatly among individuals and is unrelated to success.”

Bashaw and Grant (1994)

Seek the Tall Plateau

Set your sights, not on reaching an ultimate moment that will quickly come and even more quickly go, but on reaching a level of achievement that is both satisfying and sustainable.



“Studies of former Olympic athletes not surprisingly find that they are very capable and initiative-taking individuals. However, more than half of former Olympic athletes have trouble adapting to more traditional post-athletic careers because they cannot replicate the heights of success and recognition they once enjoyed in athletics.”

Sparkes (1998)

What You Fear is What You Will Get

Worrying about things going wrong increases the chances that they will go wrong! In accepting that there will be success and failure, we are freed to achieve and spend time thinking about what we can do instead of what we cannot do.

“In a survey of high-tech employees, those who spend ‘a lot’ of time worrying about their jobs are 17 percent less productive than workers who ‘seldom’ or ‘never’ worry about their job.”

Verbeke and Bagozzi (two thousand)

You Are out if you Doubt

Confidence spreads with successes, and lack of confidence multiplies with failures. If your confidence falters, turn to what you do best, and then take on more challenging tasks.

“People who feel less talented than those around them actually believe they will be outperformed in any task they might be asked to complete, ranging from knowledge tests to creativity exercises and even games.”

Mayo and Christenfeld (1999)

Keep Your Goals in Front of You

Keep your goals where you can see them every day. Your goals should offer you direction, hope, and encouragement. Create your goals, use them, follow them, update them, and live by them everyday.

“Successful people spend at least fifteen minutes every day thinking about what they are doing and can do to improve their lives.”

Sigmund (1999)



The Future is Not Your Past

Your behavior steers your success – not where you grew up, not where you went to school, not ... whether your path so far has been easy or difficult. Opportunity lies ahead – it is a matter of whether you choose to pursue it.

“The current pattern of behavior employees engages in (both inside and outside the office) is six times more likely to predict job performance than is their background and job history.”
Arrison (1998)

Losses can be Good

Learn from your losses. The setbacks you experience are wonderful opportunities to gain experience. Not only can you learn what you have done wrong, but you can come to understand what has led you to make the choices you have made. Practice gaining something every time things do not go your way.

“Most students who failed in college and later returned for their degree report that the biggest difference in their second chance was better knowledge of themselves and their capabilities and commitments.”
Robeson (1998)

Want Less

Do not make the mistake of wanting everything. Success in life is not a matter of getting everything. This is an impossible thing. Success is a matter of getting what you need.

“What success means is not universal. Studies of people who have attained nearly identical achievements in the workplace, for example, find great variation in their level of satisfaction, with some considering themselves tremendously successful and others considering themselves average or even failures.”
Maasen and Landsheer (two thousand)

Life is a Game

Life is a game of odds. There is an element of chance in everything. Every aspect of your education, career, and life has been affected by fate. New opportunities are looked at or missed depending on who is paying attention to that day. Realize that the more you play the game of life, the greater chance you have of winning. Some days will not be for you, and some will be for you.



“Career analysts find that 83 percent of mid-career professionals believe chance played a significant role in their ultimate career path and that they highly value staying open for unexpected opportunities.”

Williams, Soeprapto, Like, Touradji, Hess, and Hill (1998)

Goals

Goals are living – they must evolve with you. Your goals will cause you to be motivated, or your goals will cause you to stall. This all depends on the usefulness of your goals. Keep your goals far enough away that you need to keep trying but close enough that you can someday reach them.

“Research on recent college graduates finds that 70 percent react to negative early experiences in the workplace by becoming defensive about their abilities. Because they shun feedback in the aftermath of a setback at work, they have trouble adapting their outlook and habits to help them succeed.”

Trope and Pomerantz (1998)

Lessons Can't Threaten

When you try to teach anyone something new, you must make it clear from the outset that the destination is someplace we would all like to go.

“Feelings of self-threat are the single biggest obstacle in gaining the willing participation of workers in new training programs. Moreover, feelings of self-threat tend to spread among co-workers as they share their concerns.”

Wisensfeld, Raghuram, and Raghu (1999)

If you Feel Wanted, You will Work Harder

Money, prestige, and all the other aspects of work we benefit from will be compromised if we do not think that those we work for care about us.

“Lower management workers who felt like they were appreciated by superiors were 52 percent less likely to look for a different job.

Jones (two thousand)

Find Your Own Path

Before you try to live up to someone else's expectations, or reproduce someone else's success, ask yourself whether that is what you were really made for.



“Of people who feel they have failed to achieve success in their lives, 64 percent point to a specific standard set by others that they were unable to live up to.”

Arnold (1995)

It is Not How Hard You Try

You can spend a lot of effort, time, and money and gain nothing. Or you can spend modest efforts and gain success. The purpose of what you do is to make progress in your goals, not just to expend yourself.

“Effort is the single most overrated trait in producing success. People rank it as the best predictor of success when it is one of the least significant factors. Effort, by itself, is a terrible predictor of outcomes because inefficient effort is a tremendous source of discouragement, leaving people to conclude that they can never succeed since even expending maximum effort has not produced results.”

Scherneck (1998)

You Start It – You End It

Accept personal responsibility for your decisions and prepare yourself for the potential opportunities of the future.

“The ability to accept personal responsibility for work outcomes and to thrive under individual scrutiny improves your chances by 65 percent of successfully making the transition from working for a traditional large company to succeeding in a job at a small firm or as an independent consultant.”

Peiperl and Barcuch (1997)

The Enemy Can Be Boredom

Boredom will eat away at your persistence and resolve. No one can do the same job, requiring the same tasks, with perpetual interest and enthusiasm.

“Low-variety jobs produce twice as much employee turnover and three times less job satisfaction than high-variety jobs.”

Melnarik (1999)



There is Plenty of Time

We hear a clock ticking as we dream and plan. Our family, our friends, even the media all make us wonder when we are finally going to be there and why we are not there yet. When it comes to success, there are no age restrictions. It takes as long as it takes, and when you reach it, you will not reject success because you are not the right age for it.

“Age is unrelated to people’s commitment to their job and their level of job performance.”
Tuuli and Karisalmi (1999)

Caring

Care is an integral part in a person’s life and their path of success. It is investing themselves with those around them – people’s time, people’s lives, people’s interests, people’s concerns, people’s well-being, and anything else that is important to those around you.

“Eight in ten CEOs report that a healthy family life is crucial to a productive business life and that the same key skill – ‘interpersonal engagement,’ the capacity to express concern and interest in those around them – is crucial to both home and work.”
Henderson (1999)

Be Realistic

The best self-confidence is based on a realistic assessment of all your abilities, and it highlights the path to all your dreams.

“Confidence, in combination with a realistic self-appraisal, produces a 30 percent increase in life satisfaction.”
Sedlacek (1999)

Efficiency

Be efficient in everything you do. An organization that wastes important resources, like the efforts of its workers, is an organization that will waste motivation.

“Corporate inefficiency reduces job satisfaction by 21 percent and increases employees’ desire to find new employment.”
Melnarik (1999)



Work and Home Must Fit Together

Successful living is not a matter of success in the workplace or success at home – it is the combination of both.

“People at the peak of their careers report that reaching their goals in work increases their commitment to their home life because they feel a profound sense of security, which improves their time outside of work.”

Persley (1998)

From Within Comes Creativity

Creativity is different from challenging work and effort – creativity in one’s life requires genuine inspiration. It is the product of a mind thoroughly intrigued by a question, a situation, and a possibility. Creativity comes when we focus on something we really want and when we are doing something we want to!

“Experiments offering money in exchange for creative solutions to problems find that monetary rewards are unrelated to the capacity of people to offer original ideas. Instead, creativity is most frequently the product of genuine interest in the problem and a belief that creativity will be personally appreciated by superiors.”

Cooper, Clasen, Silva-Jalonen, and Butler (1999)

Small Successes Are the Key

A jigsaw puzzle is the best word picture for pursuing your goals. The ultimate outcome for that goal (goals) is the outcome, but to get there, you must put the puzzle together piece by piece.

Since you will spend most of your time trying to make progress, you must enjoy what you are doing to finish. If you are not enjoying the process, you must figure out a way to so that you can accomplish what it is you are trying to succeed at. Take joy from the process every day and use the small successes to fuel your continued efforts.

“Life satisfaction is 22 percent more likely for those with a steady stream of minor accomplishments than those who express interest only in major accomplishments.”

Orlick (1998)

Write Down Directions

Many people write down and plan their vacations, organize their itineraries, and plot their routes. When it comes to their life plan, very few people give it a thought. It is important when



you are considering your life plan – the path of your life, your goals, and what you need to do to achieve them – to write them down!

Writing down your plans, goals, and ideas makes them more real for you. Every step you take to define what you want and what you need to do to get it increases the chances that you will pursue these goals and someday achieve them.

“People, who regularly keep a journal, or written record pertaining to their aspirations, are 32 percent more likely to feel like they are making progress in their lives.”
Howatt (1999)

When You Get Knocked Down Get Back Up

So many situations in life seem out of our control! Decisions are made that change our companies, our jobs, our lives – decisions we feel helpless to affect. If you can accept some uncertainty and believe in yourself, there will always be alternatives available to you. You will always have a choice no matter what the situation.

“When layoffs are announced, everybody is disappointed. But some people are overcome with woe while others are thinking of the next step. Self-image and acceptance of risk accounted for more than half of the reaction of workers who faced significant change in the workplace and were more important than nature of the changes themselves.”
Judge, Thoresen, Pucik, and Welbourne (1999)

Balanced Sleep

Sleep is a crucial factor in everyone’s life. Unfortunately, this is the first thing to go when trying to find more time. When sleep is sacrificed for extra time, your purpose, efficiency, and ability is sacrificed. Make sure you get the needed sleep you need on a regular basis.

“Most Americans have been sleepy at their job, and two in five report making errors because of sleepiness. Inadequate sleep reduces innovative thinking by 60 percent and flexibility in decision making by 39 percent.”
Harrison and Horne (1999)

Success Is a Formula

In real life, the main difference between people who achieve and people who do not is as exciting or mysterious, but it is as important. It is simply conscientiousness. People who approach things with order, commonsense, consistency, and persistence will succeed.



“In a study of recent business school graduates, employee conscientiousness was five times more likely to predict supervisor satisfaction than was employee intelligence.”

Fallon, Avis, Kudisch, Gornet, and Frost (two thousand)

Listening

Not talking does not mean you are listening. We think about what we have to say, how much to say, and how best to say it. We invest so much in talking that we sometimes treat the time when we are not talking as a rest break.

Instead, active listening, investing ourselves in what others are saying, is the only way we can learn from others and adapt what we have to say to correspond to the other person’s perspective.

“Good talkers tend not to be good listeners. Indeed, people who think of themselves as good talkers tend to rate themselves as extroverted, while good listener’s rate themselves as introverted. Good listeners are 60 percent more likely to try to put themselves in the other person’s place – trying to see things through their perspective.”

Paul (1997)

Not Trying is Failure

The fear of failure is powerful! Nobody wants anyone else to know that they are not capable of doing something they tried to do. Many people are motivated from this fear, so they constantly do things to prove others wrong. Others do nothing. The real thinking of many is “You can never fail if you do not bother to try.”

Not trying is the ultimate failure. It means you can never make progress towards your goals.

“When asked to describe significant regrets in their lives, more than eight out of ten people focused on actions they did not take rather than actions they did. In other words, they focused on things they failed to do rather than things they failed at doing.”

Ricarte (1999)

Avoid Inconsistent Emotions

Everybody likes some excitement in his or her world. Depths of feeling bad usually follow the heights of feeling good – the best way to live your life is with consistent emotions. This comes from feeding your mind and soul with daily truth, daily motivation, and daily meditation.



A successful life is not to be found in one exciting day but in a steady, productive, fulfilling career.

“Long-term studies of corporate leaders find that seven in ten of those who survive longest in their jobs downplay both the best and worst outcomes they experience and keep their feelings relatively steady. They have what psychologists call a ‘focus on an acceptable average,’ not on the extraordinary, which is useful because almost every day turns out to be more average than extraordinary.”

Ingram (1998)

Get Input From Opposites

In life, there are starters and finishers. There are big picture people and people that are great with details. Some are tenacious in making sure a project gets done, while others are great at conceiving ideas. When you involve people in your projects that are opposite of you, you benefit, and they benefit.

“Teams in the workplace composed of people with differing personalities are 14 percent more productive than teams composed of more compatible individuals.”

Fisher, Macrosson, and Wong (1998)

Get Experience

Get experience any way you can!

“College students who served in internships were 15 percent more likely to find employment after graduation and 70 percent believed they were better prepared for the workplace because of their internship experience.”

Knouse, Tanner, and Harris (1999)

Negotiating

When you negotiate with people, do it with confidence or not at all. You will face many negotiations in your life, whether for a pay raise or the terms of your next car purchase.

What determines a successful negotiation from an unsuccessful one? Skill plays a big part. So, does relative bargaining position. If you lack confidence when you deal and work with people (negotiating) you will get the lesser portion.



“Lower self-worth translates into 37 percent less willingness to negotiate and use of 11 percent fewer negotiation strategies. Increased self-worth correlates with greater willingness to incur the risks of prolonged negotiation and greater adaptability. In short, the less confidence you have in yourself, the faster you will give up trying to get what you want.”

Greno-Malsch (1998)

Tomorrow

Will tomorrow be a better day? If so, how? What do you want? What do you need to do to get where you want to be? What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? What is the next step you need to take? What are the facts?

Most people have a lot of plans and ideas. But we so rarely turn our ideas into our plans, thus creating our future, because little of what we think about progresses beyond concepts and opinions. Define your goals and define your plans to attain them.

“People who construct their goals in concrete terms are 50 percent more likely to feel confident they will attain their goals and 32 percent more likely to feel in control of their lives.”

Howatt (1999)

Eat Right and Exercise

Healthy habits increase our energy and improve both our performance and our satisfaction on the job. It may take more time, but in the end, preserving your own health makes possible everything else you want to do.

“Comparing middle management employees, researchers have found that those whose careers continue to have momentum are 53 percent more likely to engage in healthy life habits than those whose careers are stalled.”

Roberts and Friend (1998)

If You Are Not in Control, You Will Give up Faster

What is the main difference between those that quit and keep going? It is the person’s sense of self-control.

Those who persevere recognize that they are responsible, not just for pursuing their goals, but also for setting them. When you are in control, what you do matters and giving up never ever seems attractive!



“Research comparing students of similar ability finds that the distinguishing feature between those who maintain a strong work ethic in their studies and those who give up is a sense of control. Those who express a sense of control receive scores that are a full letter grade higher than those who do not.”

Medoza (1999)

The Difference between Everyone and You

As you watch the news, listen to the radio, read the newspaper.... Don't let your perspective be shaped by attention-grabbing events. The news does not cover people who had a good day, succeeded, and enjoy a wonderful family. Don't let the negative picture of the world cloud your perspective.

“People are seven times more likely to be optimistic about their personal future than they are about the future of their generation.”

Arnett (two thousand)

Before it Gets Better it Might get Worse

The things you want the most are not the easiest to get. If this were not so, you would already have them. We are faced with the daunting fact that to pursue our goals, to make our lives better, we must first endure and sacrifice.

You could minimize your efforts now, which would offer momentary comfort but leave you well suited to achieve in the future, or you could maximize your effort now and create an ideal future.

“Among managers in upper-level positions, 84 percent report having had to deal with a ‘period of discomfort’ in their lives. Some took career risks, worked long hours, or acquired new skills, but they saw the sacrifice as necessary to pursue employment, promotion, and success.”

Atkinson (1999)

Conflict – Face it Head On

Ignoring conflict does not make it go away. This will just feed the conflict and make it worse over time. Discuss conflicts between your work life and your home life because that is the only way you can make the situation better.



“Two-career couples were 56 percent more likely to express satisfaction with their marriage when they did not avoid dealing with conflicts and disagreements brought on by their work schedules.”

Howell (1999)

Whatever You Do, Own It

What you do represents who you are – your ability, your commitment, your passions, your vision – your potential to do something more!

“Satisfaction with work improved by 34 percent when employees felt they were individually responsible for their work output.”

McCaw (1999)

Be Honest

Be honest about your future. Lying to ourselves about our goals is like paying off a loan by taking out an even bigger loan. It makes today easier, but it makes tomorrow much more difficult.

“People who consider their careers to have been successful are 81 percent less likely to have exaggerated their career plans when they were younger.”

Ingram (1998)

Not a Victory

A victory at all costs is not a victory. In your efforts to be successful, the emphasis must be on winning with a purpose, not merely on winning. Our focus needs to be the big picture and what you really want.

“The will to succeed comes in two distinct forms. Hyper-competitive people (60 percent) focus on winning all the time, regardless of the importance of the matter. Self-oriented competitive people (40 percent) focus on doing well but with an emphasis on improving themselves so that they can do even better in the future.”

Glaman (1999)

What is the Point?

While many of us chase money, fame, prestige, recognition, and other things – the single most important thing you can chase is meaning. When you have a purpose in all that you do, every day becomes valuable and every outcome, good or bad, worthwhile.



“Feeling there is meaning in your life is eight times more likely to produce satisfaction than is a high income.”

King and Napa (1998)

Application

The most important decisions you can make are to apply these scientific success areas to actual goals, objectives, and areas in your work and personal life.

What are the Application Steps?

Below is an example of how the application, realization, and follow through of each area and step can help you succeed in the area you have identified.

The example below has to do with business. You can take these same steps and apply them to any other project, area, or plan in your life at business and in your personal life.

Step 1 – Identify the Area

Reduce costs 10% overall on the bottom line without terminating anyone and without jeopardizing quality.

Step 2 – Create Your Plan

Establish the detailed areas for step 1 and how you will accomplish this. This step includes detailed areas about how you are going to accomplish this (areas, staff, goods and services, efficiencies, productivity, process analysis, staff involvement, etc.).

Step 3 – Who?

Determine who will be involved in the Area and Plan.

Step 4 – Review Plan/Accountability and Buy In

After you have determined who, make sure there is buy in, commitment, and accountability from all involved. After you have shared the plan, make any changes to the plan from any suggestions.

Step 5 – How does each Scientific Success area Impact your Project/Plan?

Review each scientific success area above to determine how sound your plan is, how you are doing in this plan, how realistic your measurement of success is, and any other areas. Use these areas to provide you with a measurement of your success at the start, between, and at the end.



Step 6 – Stick to Your Plan (as listed above)

Stay the course of your plan, make any necessary changes to stay on course, revise steps as necessary so that you can realize your achievement in each area of your business and personal life.

What are You Going to Change, Desire, Think, Say, and Do Today and Every Day for Success Change?

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