

4 Things You Can Do to Achieve Success

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Success is defined in many ways. Typically, it is measured by goals being set and attained. Some people also measure it in terms of measurable criteria, such as time, money, effort, or other tangible and intangible aspects. No matter how you measure success, there are five things you can do to help make sure that you are successful in life.

1. Set Goals in Writing. Researchers have found that people are more likely to attain their goals and objectives if they put them in writing and keep them visible. For example, written on a calendar or other tracking tool, taped to an office wall or the refrigerator, or set up into some electronic alerting device.

2. Grasp Opportunities. Too often, people fail to recognize or take advantage of opportunities that present themselves. The Latin term “Carpe diem” (seize the day) has profound implications and should be heeded. Many people typically find excuses why they cannot do something rather than looking for ways to accomplish it. For example, someone offers you an opportunity to get involved on a Board of Directors for a professional organization, or a non-profit, religious, or other non-work related group. The excuse often given is, “I don’t have time.” No one does in today’s world, yet many professionals seem to make time and still have a life. While this may be legitimate for some people, you have to weigh the possible gains versus time investment. Might you meet other professionals in your industry or elsewhere that could help further your career, personal, or professional goals? Consider the short term investments and the potential long-term gains.

3. Prepare Yourself for the Real-World. The reality in the workplace of today is that your position may be eliminated or you may very well someday be downsized. Do not wait until you receive the notice to start thinking of what you will do next. Here are few things you can do:

- Have a contingency plan in your head;
- Think about other things you are good at (make a list of strengths and weaknesses and update it as your knowledge and skills grow);
- Develop a professional network of people you can call upon;
- Get as much training and education as possible (preferably at your employers expense);
- Keep your resume updated and with you all the time. You never know when you will need it or an exceptional opportunity might present itself.

4. Think Like a Leader Instead of a Follower. Many people who are achievers and become successful often take the approach of “lead, follow, or get the heck out of the way.” Translated, this means “make a decision and take charge.” No one like someone who waffles back and forth or seems indecisive and unable to make a decision or commit to something. Do not wait to be told what to do. Think ahead and look for opportunities to improve everything you touch. Be a visionary. By being confident, knowing the facts and taking initiative, you can position yourself as a confidant or mentor to others while securing a place at the leadership table.

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