

Keys to Success

By Rob McKelvey

Success means different things to different people. It can vary depending on work and personal life. It may mean that big promotion, the new house, the holiday home, lots of money, time spent with the family, growing a business, approval from a parent, setting a personal best time in a marathon, climbing a mountain, or even a sense of happiness or fulfilment. What ever success means for you, it is your's and not someone else's meaning. Unfortunately, many people live a life according to someone else's definition of success. If this is the case for you, then it may well be a false definition of success and it would be useful and wise for you to review the authenticity of this definition.

So what are the keys to success? Well from my discussions with people who perceive themselves to be successful, and from my own coaching work and observation, the following seem to be the keys.

PASSION

“Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing you will be successful”... Buddha

Successful people that I have talked to have stated that they love what they are doing. They are passionate about it. They can't wait to get up in the morning and get stuck into it. They are proud of what they do and share that pride with people because they love what they do. It is much easier to develop a passion for what you do when you love it. Or perhaps the passion comes first and then you do it. Either way passion has a role to play. Think back yourself to things that you have done that you didn't like. Were you passionate about it? Probably not. And as we all know, passion is contagious. It also stokes the fire and energy of life

DEFINITION

“To freely bloom - that is my definition of success.”...Gerry Spence

Defining success is very important. And it is personal. By that I mean that the definition is only authentic when it is your own. It can be soul destroying to define your success through the eyes of someone else. It can be soul fulfilling when you define it for you. Now this does not mean that your definition of success can't be the same as someone else's; it can be. The caveat here is that you are defining success from within you, not from someone or something outside of you. And remember, there is short term success and long term success. The people I talked to all had definitions of what success was specifically for them, what it looked and felt like, and goals for how they would achieve it.

FOCUS

“Focus on remedies, not faults.”... Jack Nicklaus

Where do you put your attention? We get what we focus on...whether that is good things or bad things. For example, if you focus on the fact that you will never be successful, or that you will likely fail at something, or not do a good enough job; then that is what you will get. Would it not make more sense to focus on being successful. Now this is an interesting concept. Equally, I have found that if you focus on someone else's definition of success for you, you may achieve it, but you may be left with a hollow feeling within yourself. So, focus on what **YOU** want for **YOUR** success.

Focus can be facilitated by setting realistic goals and objectives that will help you achieve your success. Don't be dissuaded from accomplishing these goals; be very focused on them. But on the other had, don't feel that you have failed if you do not accomplish all of them. Keep the end goal in mind and on the horizon. There are many roads that lead to Rome. Oh, and while on that road, notice now where your attention goes...success? or failure?

BALANCE

“The best and safest thing is to keep a balance in your life, acknowledge the great powers around us and in us. If you can do that, and live that way, you are really a wise man.” ...Euripides

Take time to ensure that you have balance between the physical, the psychological, and the spiritual...mind, body, spirit. By being balanced we take time to focus on what is important to us in a balanced proportion that is appropriate to individual needs. For example, if you spend 100% of your time focussing on work where will you find time to focus on family or even yourself? Thus you may be successful in your work with no real connection or success with family or with your own health. And then what happens when work changes, or goes, or you can no longer work? Successful people I talked to, and from my own observation, had a balanced life. They took time for work, time for the family, time for vacations, and time for themselves.

There is much talk in business circles about dealing with integrity. The dictionary defines integrity as *“soundness of moral principle and character; uprightness; honesty”*. If the success that you are striving for is not coming from within you, but rather from outside of you...be that family, society, or the company, then perhaps you are out of integrity with yourself. If this is the case I wonder whether you will ever have true success.

Here's wishing you true success.