

THE 25 PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS

The following is based upon and adapted from the book “How to Get from where you Are to where you Want to Be” by Jack Canfield.

These 25 principles are the result of an analysis of some of the worlds most successful people. Read though the full 25 principles first before doing anything. Don't pay too much attention to any particular one – just scan read the full document and let it sink into your unconscious mind. As you read through it your mind will begin to absorb information and form the acorn of some ideas and basic plans.

Leave it a few days and then go back to the first principle and begin to take action.

Principle 1: Take 100% Responsibility For Your Life

If you want to be successful, you have to take 100% responsibility for everything that you experience in your life. If something does not turn out as planned, you need to ask yourself questions like “How did I create that? What was I thinking? What were my beliefs? What did I say or not say? What did I do or not do to create that result? How did I get the other person to act that way?”

$$\text{Event} + \text{Response} = \text{Outcome}$$

Every outcome you experience in life is the result of how you have responded to an earlier event or events in your life. If you do not like the outcomes you are currently getting there are two basic choices you can make:

- 1) You can blame the event for your lack of results! Result? We stop ourselves. We think limiting thoughts and engage in self-defeating behaviours
- 2) You can simply change your responses to the events (the way things are) until you get the outcomes you want

You only have control over three things in your life: the thoughts you think, the images you visualise, and the actions you take.

You have to give up blaming!

“The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it” – Lou Holtz

In order to complain about something or someone, you have to believe that something better exists. The circumstances you complain about are by their very nature, situations you can change – but you have chosen not to.

So why do we simply not do these things, make those changes. It's because they involve risks! *If you want to get from where you are to where you want to be, of course you are going to have to take that risk!*

Have you ever noticed that people almost always complain to the wrong person – to people who cannot do anything about their complaint? Learn to replace complaining with making requests and taking action that will achieve your desired outcomes.

To be powerful, you need to take the position that you create or allow everything that happens to you. By create I mean that you directly cause something to happen by your actions or inactions. Alternatively, we allow things to happen to us by our inactions and our unwillingness to do what is necessary to create or maintain what we want.

Be aware that nothing just “happens” to you. Watch out for yellow alerts that warn of impending danger. External alerts might be a boss screaming at a workmate, or a client not showing for a first meeting. Internal alerts might be a gut feeling, or waking up at night with an issue on your mind. These alerts give you time to change your Response to an Event.

To be more successful you need to act in ways that produce more of what you want. You have to be willing to pay attention to what you are doing and to the results that you are producing.

Do not be afraid to ask for feedback. The truth is the truth. Better that you know now.

Ask yourself:

How am I creating or allowing this to happen?

What am I doing that’s working that I need to be doing more of?

What am I doing that’s not working?

What do I need to do less of?

What am I not doing that I need to try to see if it works?

The formula is simple: do more of what is working, do less of what isn’t and try on new behaviours to see if they produce better results.

The easiest, fastest and best way to find out what is or isn’t working is to pay attention to the results that you are currently producing. If you don’t like the results you see, then take 100% responsibility and change you!

Principle 2: Be Clear Why You’re Here

Really successful people take the time to understand what they’re here to do – and then they pursue that with passion and enthusiasm.

Having a purpose, everything in life seems to fall into place. When you are truly on purpose, the people, resources and opportunities you need naturally gravitate towards you.

Once you know what your life purpose is, you can organise all of your activities around it. Without purpose as the compass to guide you, your goals and actions plans may not ultimately fulfil you.

To begin to hone in on your purpose, make a list of the times you have felt most joyful and alive.

“Figure out what you love to do as early as you can, and then organise your life around figuring out how to make a living at it” - Pat Williams

Principle 3: Decide What You Want

Once you have decided what you are here for, you have to decide what you want to do, be and have. In other words, what does success look like to you?

Remember that as children we learned how to act and how to be to get the approval of our carers etc. As a result we now do a lot of things we don't want to do but that please a lot of other people!

Start now on a small scale by honouring your preferences in every situation – no matter how large or how small. When you are confronted by a choice, no matter how small or insignificant, act as if you have a preference. To the question, “What will we do tonight?” make a choice! Do not say it doesn't matter! Make a preference choice.

One of the easiest ways to begin clarifying what you truly want is to make a list of 30 things you want to do, 30 things you want to have and 30 things you want to be before you die. This is a great way to get the ball rolling.

What often stops people from expressing their true desire is they don't think they can make a living doing what they love to do. Well, Oprah loves to meet and talk, Tiger loves to golf, Donald Trump loves to build, and Bono loves to sing...

Make a list of 20 things you love to do, and then think of ways you could make a living doing some of those things.

To create a balanced and successful live your vision needs to include the following 7 areas: Work & Career, Finances, Recreation & Free time, Health & Fitness, Relationships, Personal Goals, and Contribution.

This works like a GPS system. All you have to do is decide where you want to go by clarifying your vision, lock in the destination through goal setting, affirmations and visualisation, and begin moving in the right direction. Your inner GPS will keep unfolding your route as you continue to move forward. In other words, once you clarify and stay focussed on your vision, the exact steps will keep appearing along the way. Once you are clear about what you want and keep your mind constantly focussed on it, the how will keep showing up – sometimes just when you need it and not a moment earlier.

“The danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it” – Michelangelo

It is said that one of the few differences between the superachievers and the rest of the world is that the superachievers simply dream bigger. They believe anything is possible and they believe that they have an integral part in creating it.

Write out what you want in each of the areas listed above. Then, each day take some time out and begin to lock your GSP system on target by closing your eyes and visualising your vision in each of them.

And remember that it is good practice to share your dreams with others. Talking about them brings them to mind and strengthens your GPS within your subconscious mind.

Principle 4: Believe its Possible

The mind is such a powerful instrument it can deliver to your literally everything you want. But you have to *believe* that what you want is possible.

Scientists now are learning that we respond to what, on the basis of previous experience, the brain expects to happen. As an example, tests were carried out on patients undergoing knee surgery in Texas. One group were put through the whole “operation” but in fact there was no actual surgery carried out. Two years after “surgery” they reported the same level of pain relief.

The science is called *Expectancy Theory* and is based upon the fact that because our brains (often subconsciously) expect something will happen in a certain way, we will often achieve exactly what we anticipate.

“Sooner or later, those who win are those who think they can”

- Richard Bach (author of Jonathon Livingston Seagull)

Principle 5: Believe in Yourself

You simply have to believe that you are capable of making it happen! Believing in yourself is a *choice*. It is your *responsibility* to take charge of your own self-concept and your beliefs.

The common thread among all of the super successful people interviewed was: “I was not the most gifted or talented person in my field, but I chose to believe anything was possible. I studied, practiced and worked harder than the others, and that’s how I got to where I am.”

The producer Stephen J. Cannell failed 1st, 4th and 10th grades in school. Stephen said that he simply refused to think about it. Instead he focussed on what he was good at (football) and found that if he applied himself he could achieve anything.

“I am looking for a lot of men who have an infinite capacity to not know what can’t be done”

- Henry Ford

“The phrase “I can’t” is the most powerful force of negation in the human psyche”

- Paul Scheele (Chairman, Learning Strategies Corporation)

20% of America's millionaires never set foot in college, and 21 of the 222 Americans listed as billionaires in 2003 never got their college diplomas.

“You have to believe in yourself when no one else does. That's what makes you a winner”

- Venus Williams

Quit worrying about what others say or think about your dreams and plans.

“When you're 18 you worry that everybody is thinking of you; when you're 40 you don't give a darn about what anyone thinks about you; when you're 60 you realise nobody's been thinking about you at all”

- Dr. Daniel Amen

Principle 6: Become an Inverse Paranoid

W. Clement Stone counselled that instead of believing that the world was plotting to do him harm, he chose to believe the world was plotting to do him good! Nice idea!

In fact, there is a growing body of research that the vibrations of positive expectation that successful people give off actually attract to them the very experiences they believe they are going to get!

“Every negative event contains within it the seed of an equal or greater benefit”

- Napoleon Hill (author of Think and Grow Rich)

What if you were to “look for the lemonade in the lemons”? What if you too were to greet every interaction in your life with the question “What is the potential opportunity in this?”

Successful people approach every conversation with the idea that something good will come from it. They awake each day with the statement “I believe the world is plotting to do me good today – I can't wait to see what it is”. And then they *look* for the opportunities and the miracles.

Principle 7: Unleash the Power of Goal Setting

“If you want to be happy, set a goal that commands your thoughts, liberates your energy, and inspires your hopes”

- Andrew Carnegie (richest man in America in the early 1900's)

Whatever goal you give your subconscious mind it will work night and day to achieve!

The difference between an idea and a goal is that a goal is clear, measurable and unambiguous, and should be written down in the present tense (i.e. already achieved).

When you write it all down, your subconscious mind will know what to work on. It will know which opportunities to hone in on to help you reach your goal.

You should also set goals that *stretch* you. It is also useful to have at least one *breakthrough goal*! By that I mean that its achievement would represent a quantum leap for you – it would change everything.

It is important to re-read your goals 2 or 3 times each day (morning and night are best), and to actually emotionally “feel” what it feels like to have this goal achieved. Doing this creates what is called “structural tension” in your brain. This means that your brain has two “realities” and it will do anything to close this gap or tension.

It is a great idea to develop a goal or vision board. This is a board on which you put pictures that represent your goals and gives you a real visual feel of achieving them. It is also a good idea to keep them written in short in your diary or wallet so you can review them at any time – no more boredom at bus stops!

Imagine that you sit down and make a list of *everything* you want to achieve in your life! Aim for a list of 101 things, big and small. The when you achieve one, your write “VICTORY” beside it. Cover every part of your life.

As a struggling comic, Jim Carrey used to drive his old Toyota up to Mulholland Drive looking over LA and dream of his future. He wrote himself a check for \$10 million and dated it Thanksgiving 1995. It was notated “for acting services rendered”. The rest is history.

The main obstacles to achieving your goals are:

1. Considerations: “My territory is maxed out”. “I would have to get up 2 hours earlier”. “You could lose everything”. Etc. These are often subconscious, so listen carefully to that critical voice inside and make them conscious – then deal with them.
2. Fears: these are feelings rather than thoughts and may involve fear of rejection or of failure. That is ok; everyone will feel these at some time and pretty much tell you that you are stretching yourself.
3. Roadblocks: these are purely external circumstance, stuff you encounter along the road. Like any roadblock they are roadblocks and not road stoppers! Go over, under or around. They will be there for everyone.

The above are real life situations and must be seen for what they are: at worst they are yield signs, not stop signs! If you do not come across a few you have not stretched yourself.

Remember that the only thing that can never be taken away from you is what you become on your journey towards your goal – so aim for *Mastery* as your ultimate goal. On your way to your own version of success you are going to become a bigger person. You will develop new skills, new attitudes and new capabilities. You are going to stretch yourself, and in so doing, you will be stretched forever.

You can lose material things, but you cannot lose your mastery!

So before we move on the next principle:

1. Make a list of goals in each part of your life (say 3 in each of 5 areas of your life)
2. Create a vision board
3. Decide on a breakthrough goal
4. Create a list of 101 things you want to do before you die

Doing the above puts you into the top 3% of achievers!

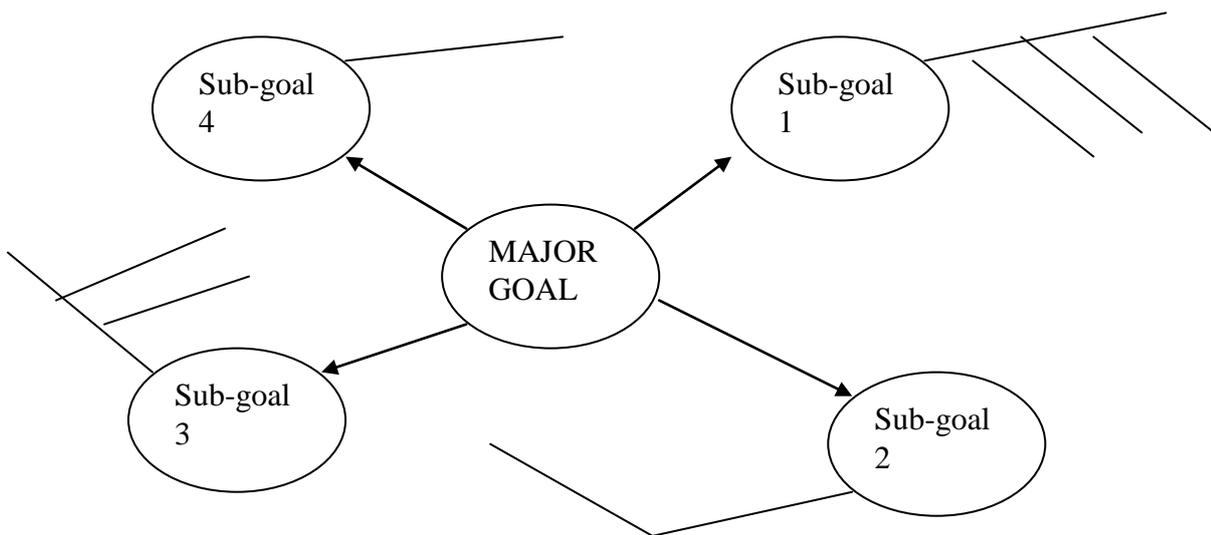
To get into the top 1% write down some specific actions you can do to achieve your goals and then... action them!

Principle 8: Chunk It Down

The best way to achieve any major goal is to chunk it down – break it down into smaller more manageable elements.

And remember that it is ok to not know how to do something. It's ok to ask for guidance for advice. Most “successful” people are only too happy to help you out, as a major part of success is to give something back!

One good way to chunk down is do draw a mind map. You enter the major goal in the centre circle and each of the sub-goals in the other circles. On the spokes coming out of the sub-goals you write down the actual actions that are required to achieve this, and then on the branches you note the even smaller actions if required.



After the above is completed you make a daily to-do list from the actions and commit to a due date for each one.

A key idea from Brian Tracy is that each day you do the thing that you have been putting off, the thing you really do not want to do. He says that each day you eat your frog! Once this is done, the rest are so much easier to complete.

It is recommended that you do your to-do list the night before. This has two advantages:

1. It sets your subconscious mind in gear to work on the actions overnight
2. It allows you to hit the ground running the next day

Principle 9: Success Leaves Clues

Almost everything that you want to achieve has already been done in some form by someone else. There are books, courses and the Internet to get information. If you do this all you are really left with is to join up the dots!

Join a library! That way you can review as many books as you need to get what you want, and then buy the book that really works for you if required.

Some tips:

1. Seek out a teacher, coach, mentor, manual, book, Internet site, audio program that can help you
2. Interview someone who has already done what you want to do
3. Ask someone if you can shadow them for a day – see how they do it
4. Offer to be a volunteer for a day

Principle 10: Release the Brakes

“Everything you want is just outside of your comfort zone”

- Robert Allen (1 Minute Millionaire)

Successful people have discovered that instead of using increased willpower as the engine to power their success, it's simply easier to “release the brakes” by letting go of and replacing their limiting beliefs and changing their self-images.

Successful people realise that they are NEVER stuck. Others just keep recreating the same experience over and over again by thinking the same thoughts, maintaining the same beliefs, speaking the same words and doing the same things.

As long as you keep complaining about your present circumstances, your mind will focus on it and ensure that you create more of what you are complaining about! It is therefore crucial that you let go and begin to focus instead on thinking, talking and writing about the reality you actually want to create.

“The significant problems we face cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them”

- Albert Einstein

“Your imagination is a preview of life’s upcoming attractions”
- Albert Einstein

We are programmed by our upbringing to develop our comfort zone, and when we experience levels of discomfort we tend to fall back into it. Often we are programmed that money is the source of all evil, so no matter how hard we try we cannot seem to attract more of it. We all have comfort zones for all kinds of things: clothes, restaurants, cars, money...

To achieve success it is necessary to bombard your subconscious with images of what you want so that you stretch your comfort zones and allow success to enter. Commonly called affirmations, they can be highly effective, but there are a set of rules that must be followed:

1. Start with the words “I am” as in “I am wealthy”
2. Use the present tense so that you are stating the goal as already achieved
3. State it in the positive as in “I am now slim” NOT “I will lose weight”
4. Keep it brief – act as if each word costs €1000
5. Make it specific as in “I am now driving my new red Porsche 911”
6. Include an “ing” word as in “I am now earning €150k per year”
7. Add an emotive word as in: proudly, happily, excited ...
8. Relate them to you not others i.e. do not say that “my boss is now paying me more”, rather “I am now earning...”
9. Add something like “or more, or better...”

So a great affirmation would be:

“I am now so excited that I am earning €10000 euro or more every month”

Important process to use the above:

1. See the image in your mind as you repeat the words
2. Hear any relevant sounds that go with the goal
3. Really feel how you would feel on achieving it
4. Do this morning and night
5. Say the words out loud if you can
6. Write them out and keep them with you
7. Be open to new ideas, chance meetings, unexpected opportunities etc

Principle 11: See What You Want, get What You see

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions”
- Albert Einstein

Using your imagination greatly accelerates the achievement of success in 3 powerful ways:

1. It activates the creative power of the subconscious mind
2. It activates your Reticular Activating System (RAS) so you notice opportunities

3. It magnetises and attracts to you the people, resources and opportunities to get you to your goals

A Harvard study found that students who visualised in advance performed tasks with almost 100% accuracy against those who did not scoring only 55%.

Visualisation creates Structural Tension in your brain, which is a gap between the actual reality and the reality you are visualising. To close this your brain goes to work on achieving that which you are visualising. It will create new solutions and levels of motivation to help do this.

The brain is processing about 8 million bytes of data per second, but your conscious mind can only process about 7 of these. It is your RAS that determines what these 7 bytes are and your RAS does this based upon what you are predominantly thinking about or feeling. Visualisation will make sure that your RAS is choosing things that will help achieve your goals.

When visualising it is useful to write out the images first and determine the sounds, feelings, colours, sensations etc. that do along with the images. Then take some quiet time and visualise these. And most importantly, add as much positive exciting emotion as you can – this is crucial. The emotional content will cause the neurons in your brain to grow at an accelerated rate to set your brain up for success.

To help the process it is useful to cut out pictures of what you want to achieve and tack them to a board in your study etc. Each time you see the pictures just get into the emotion of how you would feel when that is yours in reality.

Some psychologists are now claiming that one hour of visualisation is worth 7 hours of physical effort.

Principle 12: Act As If...

One of the greatest strategies for success is to act as if you are already where you want to be. This means thinking like, talking like, dressing like, acting like and feeling like the person who has already achieved your goal.

When you begin to do this in conjunction with the other principles you activate the Law of Attraction at an accelerated rate, which states that at the quantum level like tends to attract like.

One novel idea is to hold a party where everyone comes as the person they would be after achieving their life's goals and be that person for the whole night. This is a powerful way to really activate these mental principles.

So how would a manager act, talk and dress? A Life Coach? A business mentor? An entrepreneur? If the answer is different from how you now act, talk and dress then begin to change now. This sends a powerful message to your subconscious mind and activates your RAS.

Principle 13: Take Action

The universe rewards action! When you take action you trigger all kinds of things that will invariably carry you to success. All manner of good things begin to flow in your direction once you begin to take action. The one thing that really separates winners from losers is that winners take more action. They keep going forward, learning, changing, and adjusting until they achieve their goals, or something even better.

To be successful you have to do what successful people do, and successful people are highly action-orientated.

So after carrying out the previous principles its time to begin to take action! Enrol on the course. Get some new training. Call the travel agent. Start that book. Start a savings plan...

“If your ship doesn’t come in, swim out and meet it”
- Jonathan Winters

Planning is of course important, but it must be kept in perspective. Some people wait their whole lives waiting for the perfect time to do something. There is rarely a perfect time to do anything. What is important is to just get started. Get into the game.

The quickest way to hit a target is to fire, see where the bullet landed, and then adjust your aim accordingly.

Often when you carry out the previous principles you will have an inspired thought. Usually, we let it go as wishful thinking, but in fact it is more than likely the perfect solution, but we wait and hesitate. Take action.

The reason most of us hesitate is that we are afraid to fail. Successful people realise that failure is simply a part of success – they learn and move on. Be ok with failing – call it “failing forward”.

“You can never learn less; you can only learn more. The reason I know so much is because I have made so many mistakes”
- Buckminster Fuller

All science is a process of experimentation, failure, change, experimentation, fail, change, experimentation...success.

Principle 14: Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway

Successful people do feel the fear along with the rest of us but don’t let it stop them from doing anything they want to do – or HAVE to do. Its ok to acknowledge that fear exists but don’t let it stop you.

Most of the good stuff requires taking a risk. And the nature of a risk is that sometimes things simply do not work out!

“Everybody told me that I was out of my freaking mind. And the one thing I have discovered is that when everyone says you are out of your mind you might be on to something”.

- Jeff Arche (Writer and Director of Sleepless in Seattle)

FEAR usually equals Fantasized Experiences Appearing Real...

A useful technique to combat fear is to make a list of everything that you are afraid to DO (as opposed to a list of things you are afraid of). Now take each one and complete the following sentence:

I want to (insert the thing here), and I scare myself by imagining (insert what you imagine will happen here).

So as an example: I want to go out on my own in business, and I scare myself by imagining that everyone will laugh at me if it goes wrong.

You are creating your own fear. Now work on replacing that imagined thing with what you want to happen and use the previous visualisation techniques to make it real to you.

“I have lived a long life and had many troubles, most of which never happened”

- Mark Twain

Now picture your old imagined fear and then your new image. Shuttle back and forth between them spending about 15 seconds on each.

“If you can’t, you must, and if you must, you can”

- Anthony Robbins

If your fear about something is just too big, then chunk or break it down into smaller bits that are less “scary”. Then take action!

The fact is that all the successful people interviewed for the book have been willing to take a chance – a leap of faith – even though they were afraid.

“Living at risk is like jumping off the cliff and building your wings on the way down”

- Ray Bradbury

“Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly”

- Robert F Kennedy

If you want to remain calm and peaceful as you go through life, you have to have high intention and low attachment. You do everything you can to create your desired outcomes, and then you let it go.

Principle 15: Ask! Ask! Ask!

“You’ve got to ask. Asking is, in my opinion, the worlds most powerful and neglected secret to success and happiness”

- Percy Ross

Asking – one of the most powerful success principles of all – is still a challenge that holds most people back!

Why are people so afraid to ask? They are afraid of many things such as looking needy, looking foolish, and looking stupid. But mostly they are afraid of experiencing rejection. They are afraid of hearing the word NO!

We often reject ourselves before we have even given the other person a chance to. Take the risk! They might even say yes!

Some rules for asking that you can follow:

1. Ask as if you expect to get it
2. Assume you can
3. Ask the right person – the person who can give it to you
4. Be clear and specific about what you want
5. Ask repeatedly

And be ok with the idea that there’s going to be a lot of rejection along the way to the brass ring.

A telling statistic from Herbert True of Notre Dame University:

- 44% of all salespeople quit trying after the first call
- 24% quit after the second call
- 14% quit after the third call
- 12% quit after the 4th call

That means that 94% of all sales people quit after the fourth call – BUT 60% of all sales are made after the fourth call!!!

You have nothing to lose and everything to gain by asking...

Take the time now to make a list of things that you want that you don’t ask for at home, school or work. Beside each one write down how you stop yourself from asking. What is your fear? Next, write down what it is costing you not to ask. Then write down the benefit your might get if you were to ask.

Then ASK!

Principle16: Reject Rejection

To get over rejection you have to realise that rejection is really a myth.

If you ask for something and you do not get it, things have not got worse – they have actually stayed the same! It only gets worse when you go inside and tell yourself something like: “See, nobody cares about you!” Or: “I knew it wouldn’t work”.

The fact is that some people are going to say yes and some people are going to say no. So what! Out there somewhere, someone is waiting for you and your ideas – it’s simply a numbers game!

Get used to the idea that there is going to be a lot of rejection along the way to success. The key is not to give up. When someone says no, you say NEXT!

Colonel Harlan Sanders received over 300 rejections for his fried chicken recipe before someone said yes – there are now 11000 KFC restaurants in 80 countries around the globe.

The first Chicken Soup for the Soul book received over 130 rejections and yet went on to sell 8 million copies.

Remember, to get what you want you are going to need to ask, ask, ask, and then say next, next, next until you get the yes you are looking for.

Some famous rejections:

1. Alexander Graham bell was told about his phone invention: “What use would a company have with this electrical toy”
2. Angie Everhart, a famous model and actress was told that redheads don’t sell
3. Stephen King threw the manuscript for Carrie into the bin after receiving so many rejections
4. The co-founders of Google offered Yahoo a merger in 1998 and were told to stay in school with their little project
5. The rejections for the Harry Potter books are now legendary!

Finally, a popular British mystery writer call John Creasy probably holds the record by receiving 743 rejections before he sold his first book. Over the next 40 years he went on to publish 562 full length books under 28 different pseudonyms!

So reject rejection – if you are not getting enough yes’s you are probably not getting enough no’s!

Principle17: Use Feedback to Your Advantage

Asking for feedback is really only the first part of the equation – once you receive feedback you have to be willing to respond to it.

There is as much useful data in negative feedback as there is in positive feedback. It tells us that we are off course, headed in the wrong direction, doing the wrong things. This is also very valuable information!

Perhaps you could reframe negative feedback into “improvement opportunities”. The world is telling me where and how I can improve what I am doing.

3 ways to respond to negative feedback that don't work:

1. Cry, fall apart, cave in, give up
2. Get angry at the person giving the feedback
3. Don't listen or ignore the feedback

Imagine if you would ask everyone who you know the following question and do the opposite of the above three reactions:

Q: How do you see that I limit myself?

Imagine the power of asking the following question (or variation) every time you interacted with someone:

Q: On a scale of 1 – 10 how would rate my performance over the past week?

If the answer is less than 10 then ask:

Q: What would it take to make it a 10?

Be willing to ask for feedback – most people are afraid to do so! The irony of this is if you don't ask then you are the only one not in on the secret. Everyone else knows! So ask and feel grateful for the feedback. Feel ok about asking that lost customer what it would take to win back the business. Ask that friend what it would take to win back their friendship...

So, what about when the feedback tells you that you have failed?

1. Acknowledge that you did the best you could with what you had at the time
2. Acknowledge that you survived
3. Write down what you learned
4. Thank everyone for their feedback
5. Clean up any messes
6. Review what did go well
7. Regroup
8. Refocus and re-plan

Principle18: Commit to Constant and never-Ending Improvement

“People call me a perfectionist, but I'm not. I'm a “rightist”. I do something until its right and then I move onto the next thing.”

- James Cameron

In Japan this is the principle of Kaizen – a commitment to consistent improvement. It's that attitude where you constantly ask how you could do something better, more efficiently, more profitably etc.

The key is to improve in very small, manageable steps, but to do this on a constant basis. Asking yourself how you could make every day just a little bit better than the one before in any area of your life is Kaizen, be it a better Mother, Father, Wife or Accountant.

Principle 19: Practice Persistence

History does show us that no matter how hard it seems the longer you persist the more likely your success.

When you actually read about the rich and famous that are deemed to be overnight successes, you find that there is a long history of trying and persistence behind the so-called overnight success.

And often there will be obstacles that no amount of planning could have predicted.

Some examples:

1. Admiral Robert Peary made it to the North Pole after 7 failed attempts
2. NASA had 20 failures in its first 28 attempts to send rockets into space
3. Before Oklahoma was the success it was (269 weeks, \$7 million), Oscar Hammerstein has five flop shows that lasted less than a combined total of 6 weeks.

For any obstacles you encounter, actually write down at least 3 different ways that you could go over, under or around them.

“Difficulties are opportunities to better things; they are stepping stones to greater experience...when one door closes another always opens; as a natural law it has to, to balance.”

- Brian Adams

Principle 20: Practice the Rule of Five

“Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out”

- Robert Collier

“If you would go every day to a very large tree and take 5 swings at it with a very sharp axe, eventually, no matter how large the tree, it would have to come down”

- Ron Scolastico

From the above comes what is known as the Rule of Five. This means that every day you do 5 specific things that will move your goal towards completion.

So what are these things? Well they do not have to be large things! Examples might be:

1. Call 5 potential clients each day
2. Write 5 pages of your new book each day
3. Visit 5 clients each day
4. Clear 5 action items from your to-do list each day
5. Leave flyers in 5 shops each day
6. Do one of each of the above every day

The point is that rather than approach the goal as one huge effort that can often seem impossible, you commit to doing 5 specific things each and every day without fail.

Principle 21: Surround Yourself with Successful People

“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with”

- Jim Rohn

It is important to spend time with the people you want to become more like. If you want to be more successful, you have to start hanging out with more successful people. You could start a mastermind group and meet once a week. Or join the chamber of commerce, or a networking group, or a professional society...

“Pay any price to stay in the presence of extraordinary people”

- Mike Murdock

Try to spend time with those who have a positive attitude, a solution-orientated approach to life – who have demonstrated that they can accomplish whatever they set out to do.

“Confidence is contagious. So is lack of confidence”

- Vince Lombardi

So many of us are in the “Ain't it awful” club, which has the effect of dragging us down.

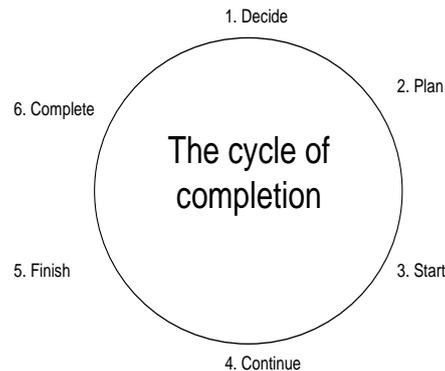
“There are two types of people – anchors and motors. You want to lose the anchors and get with the motors because the motors are going somewhere and they're having more fun. The anchors will just drag you down”

- Wyland

It is your responsibility to be 100% aware of the conversations that tend to happen with those you spend time with, and if they are toxic or negative then you need to move away. This applies to the back-biting session at coffee break in work, your neighbours, friends, club mates etc. If you were to make a list of everyone you spend time with and put a (-) or a (+) beside their name based upon their level of positivity or negativity, then it's your responsibility to spend more time with the (+) group and less time with the (-) group.

Principle 22: Clean up your Messes and Your Incompletes

Have a look at the diagram below. This is one model used to show the full life cycle of a task. Many times in our lives we get to the finish, but often we don't actually complete. In project work many companies just about get the project finished, but then move away from it, never really carrying out a 3 month review, doing a post mortem of what went right and wrong etc.



Are there areas of your life where you've left uncompleted projects or failed to get closure with people? When you don't complete the past you can't be free to fully embrace the present.

So why don't people complete? Often, incompletes represent areas in our life where we were not clear – or where we have emotional and psychological blocks. This may manifest as an inability to say no – so the workload increases, the pressure increases and the incompletes increase accordingly.

Continually ask yourself what it will actually take to get this task completed. One completed book has more chance of success than 5 works in progress.

When something gets into your hand make a spot decision to Do It, Delay It, Delegate It or Delete It.

It is like magazines or taped programs – we keep on collecting them and they keep on building up, but we never get to them. All the while there is a part of your mind building up pressure because of the incompletes – not good.

If you are really feeling cluttered then clean out the attic or shed or that wardrobe of clothes that you really don't wear! Out with the old makes room for the new. And it metaphorically cleans out the mind too.

There's a story about a businessman. Whenever he wanted new business he would clean out his car, or shed, or attic... And he swore that whenever he did this he began getting calls and emails with business offers.

Make a list of all of your incompletes and beside each one note how you are going to complete it. The choose 5 of them and get to it. Some examples are:

1. Promises not kept etc.
2. Personal issues that need closure
3. Old clothes that need to be given to charity
4. Bills that need to be filed away
5. A garage that needs sorting
6. Drawers full of bits and pieces
7. Broken stuff that needs dumping or repair
8. Uncompleted projects
9. Letters, emails or calls that really should be made
10. Holiday pictures that need framing or filing in an album
11. The missing button on your suit
12. That little bit of touch up paint that would complete that room
13. The sorry or thank you that needs giving

Another good thing to do to un-clutter your mind is to walk through your house, office, garden etc., and make a written note of all the things that irritate you. Then deal with them!

Principle 23: Develop Four New Success Habits a Year

Psychologists claim that 90% of our behaviours are habitual. 90%!

Habits are necessary as they free up your limited conscious mind so you can get on with life. The bad news is that you can become locked into unconscious self-limiting behaviours due to habits.

NB: Whatever habits you currently have are producing your current results! You need to remove these and replace them with more productive ones.

“Success is a matter of understanding and religiously practicing specific simple habits that always lead to success” – Robert R Ringer

So the habits you develop and implement from today on will determine how your future unfolds.

So, the first step is to make an honest list of all of the habits that are having a negative impact on your life. Some of these may be unconscious or blind habits i.e. you are not aware that you do them – be honest.

Step 2 is to either drop these piece by piece, and / or replace them with more productive habits. Make a new list.

Don't go overboard...if you only implement 4 new habits a year that amounts to 20 new success supporting habits over the next 5 years.

It takes about 21 days of practice for a new habit to become part of your unconscious system, so rate your new list and begin implementing number 1. When rating, decide on a clear criteria – it could be how easy they are, how cheap they are, the impact they will have...you choose.

Principle 24: Stay Focused on Your Core Genius

*“Success follows doing what you want to do. There is no other way to be successful”
– Malcolm S Forbes*

Some would say that you could change the word “what” for the word “love”. Success follows doing what you love to do.

Well this is what successful people do. They have a core genius – something they are passionate about and love to do – and they make that into a product, service or offering.

These people delegate anything outside of this so they can focus all the more time on their core.

“The biggest mistake people make in life is not to make a living at doing what they most enjoy” – Malcolm S Forbes

“All entrepreneurs are really con artists – they get other people to pay them to practice getting better at what they love to do”- Dan Sullivan

Someone once told me to that when my hobby begins to interfere with my real job it's time to go full time at it! Good advice.

“Starting out to make money is the greatest mistake in life. Do what you have a flair for doing and if you are good enough the money will come” – Greer Garson

So ask yourself what you absolutely love to do that you are good at and become an expert in it. Remember this story when you are thinking about this...

There was an American man who loved NFL football and tried everything to become a ball player. He never did! He was talking to someone in the business about his passion and this person commented that he have never spoken to anyone with as much passion and knowledge, and asked him if he would like to interview him formally. The man went on to be one of the greatest sports commentators in the USA, and would later say that he realised that it was not actually playing the game that he had been passionate about all those years ago – it was everything about the game.

Principle 25: Start Now! Just Do It!

“Many people die with their music still in them. Why is this so? Too often it is because they are always getting ready to live. Before they know it time runs out” – Oliver Wendell Holmes

Not to argue with anyone’s belief in lucky days, astrology etc., there is really only one starting strategy, and that is to start now. Today. Just do something. Anything.

Design your business card. Write a sales letter. Enrol in a course. Etc.

“First you jump off the cliff and you build wings on the way down” – Ray Bradbury
Quit waiting until you are perfectly ready. Take action now. Most of life is on-the-job training. You do something and you get feedback. You do it differently the next time.

Go back to the 1st Principle and start working through each one in the order they are presented in. Take some action in each one.

Once you begin to take action, what Buckminster Fuller called the precessional effect kicks in – I think that the quotation below explains it perfectly.

“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.”

The final word...

“Everyone who got to where they are had to begin where they were” – Richard Paul Evans

Good Luck!