



## "The Eight Traits Successful People Have in Common"

Book by Richard St. John

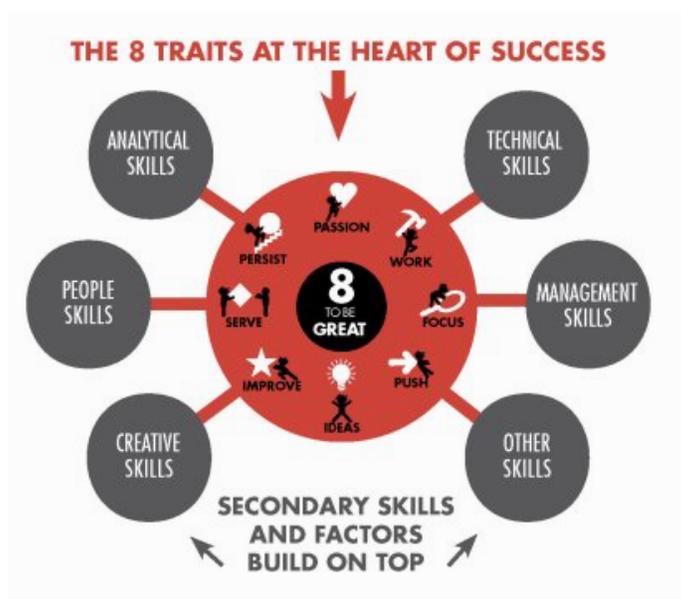
De-mystify the subject of success

Interviewed over 500 people...Bill Gates to Martha Stewart

Secret to interview techniques: shut up and listen, stay objective and set aside your own opinions, quote people accurately.

These 8 are not what we are born with..."we develop them by taking action."

There are NO SECRETS to SUCCESS



### 1. **Passion** is the starting point.

a. Steve Jobs: "The only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do." Steve Jobs

b. Start with passion and the other 7 traits are so much easier.

c. Underachievers turn into super achievers once they find their passion.

"The energy comes from within if you love what you do." Keith Black, great neurosurgeon. How many greats so you know who failed, dropped out of school only to find their love and become successful beyond belief?

Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, etc.

d. The big problem: finding your passion. "Strivers know what they love and can head straight toward it. Seekers don't know what they want and need to discover it."

Are you afraid to say that you don't know what you want because we listen to others brag that they are clear?

Strivers might have less stress, but seekers get to the same place...find their passions! Don't have to know where you are going to get there.

- e. To find passion, explore many paths. Must be willing to try many things. If you are in a job you don't like, do things on the side. "Be open to falling into your calling."
- f. "Follow your heart...go for the zing, not for the ka-ching." The money will come...why? because if you do what you love, you'll automatically work hard, focus, persist, and do all the other things that lead to success.

## 2. Work

- a. Successful people work hard. Working hard gives you the edge.
- b. Great people think about work even when they are not at work.
- c. People who love to work hard and are successful are not "workaholics." They are workafrolics. They role work and fun into one. When you do what you love, it is full of pleasure, and happiness.  
"I played for fun for 9 years. We happened to win championships." Michael Jordan
- d. Success doesn't come easy to anybody...the problem is we think it does.
- e. Great people often work long hours. There is no correlation between success and hours worked. Bill Gates worked 'til 10 almost everyday for 7 years, taking off only 15 hours. When you are starting off in anything, there are lots of hours as you are on a learning curve. Successful people never heard of TGIF; for them it is TGIW ("thank God I am working.")
- f. Work tops talent. Many people with talent thought their talent would take them far...they never achieved success. We overvalue talent and undervalue work.  
How do you develop work ethic? By hanging around people who have it.  
AND ALWAYS trust that hard work is going to pay off. Jordan Adler is a choice example.

## 3. Focus

- a. Without focus, your work becomes diluted.
- b. By focusing on one thing, you become confident. Specialize in something and become an expert. "You explore the landscape and then focus deeply in one area. You survey and then you drill down." Kim Rossmo, renowned criminologist
- c. Alternative: we become dabblers in many things and masters in none.  
You will never finish anything without focus.
- d. Focus is like a magnifying glass...all the energy goes in one-minute direction.  
Become that expert on one thing.
- e. We have a million things on our minds every day...but we can't succeed at a million things.
- f. Don't confuse single minded focus with narrow minded. Always be open to receiving new information because it gives new perspectives you can apply to your single minded pursuit.
- g. Focus has two parts: focus and concentration. Focus is more long term, and concentration is short term.  
Both mean blocking out everything but what you are concentrating on. Developing the ability to concentrate is all about training and practice.  
Also, developing the ability to snap into concentration will support you no matter what you are doing.  
To concentrate, you must learn to eliminate. Distractions are everywhere. Today, smart phones, emails, Facebook, YouTube, iPads, chat lines, there are so many distractions.  
People learn to eliminate them. (TV etc.)
- h. ADD is sometimes Interest Deficit Disorder. If you don't have interest in something you will always exhibit ADD.

## 4. Push

- a. "Push yourself. Try hard. You don't just sit and wait for life to happen to you." Leslie Westbrook, marketing consultant.
- b. Pushing ourselves helps us get through all the stuff we don't want to do. We know we need to do it to get where we want, so PUSH.
- c. Richard Branson, "I think whatever you're doing in life just push yourself to the limits."
- d. Lots of successful people are shy...but they pushed right through that. Shyness can actually pay off in a crowd because it causes you to be a better listener. But, push through it to overcome...if we stay in our cocoon, it is hard to become a butterfly and go places. People take Dale Carnegie courses in public speaking, join Toastmasters, etc. whatever it takes. Every interaction is a chance to practice pushing through shyness.
- e. Push through self doubt. Plenty have this and insecurity. 4 successful strategies:
  - (1) The done it before strategy
  - (2) The outrun it strategy
  - (3) The confident/doubt strategy
  - (4) The sleep it off strategy
- f. Get a goal to push you.
- g. Set yourself a challenge to push you. Challenges are goals with adrenaline added...they scare you a bit.
- h. Get a deadline to push you.
- i. Use discipline to push you. Arnold Palmer, "Pop didn't teach me golf. He taught me discipline." Discipline is saying NO to things.
- j. Get others to push you.
- k. Use competition to push yourself.
- l. Get a mentor to push you. "You only ever grow as a human being if you're outside your comfort zone." Percy Ceruty

## 5. Ideas

- a. Successful people come up with good ideas. Ideas are a powerful source of mental energy.
- b. Ideas light the way to success.
- c. Look for the aha moments. Capture them and run with them. Generating ideas involves creativity.
- d. Big ideas come from everyday problems.
- e. EYE Q can be more important than IQ. Look around and be observant. When you run out of ideas, look at the world.
- f. It is amazing how many good ideas come from just listening.
- g. Also ask questions as that is what will generate responses to get ideas. People tend not to ask questions because they feel they might look dumb.
- h. Borrow someone else's idea and modify it.
- i. Make connections: how can this relate to that. Make mental connections between different things...and get a new idea.
- j. Mistakes and failures lead to great ideas. When you delete ideas that don't work you come up with ones that do.
- k. Write down all your ideas...because if you don't keep track of them you will lose them. Journaling is a good way to keep track. Use your NOTES app on your smart phones so they are not lost.

## 6. Improve

- a. Constantly work on improvement...both yourself and what you do.

- b. Tiger Woods: "If I can say I am a better player on December 31 than I was on January 1 of the same year then it was a successful year..."
- c. Science and technology is driven by Continuous Improvement. Successful people continue improving themselves, their skills, and their work."
- d. Continuous improvement means doing three things:
  - (1) Getting good at what we do
  - (2) Keep getting better
  - (3) Aiming to do our best
- e. Successful people many times care more about doing a good job than fame or fortune. "So don't focus on things like success, money, respect, or awards. Focus on doing really good work and all other things will come along automatically."
- f. Being dissatisfied does not mean being unhappy. You are constantly in search of excellence and that never stops.
- g. Practice, practice and practice more. It never ends if best is your commitment.
- h. Repetition to Excess Produces Success True in sports but in every other avenue as well.
- i. Focus on your strengths; forget about your weaknesses. By focusing on what you can't do, you lose confidence. Focus on your strengths. Outsource your weaknesses...

## 7. Serve

- a. Most of 1-6 is about self; this one is about others. Achieving success is all about serving others. People don't care about you...they care about how you can fix their problems.
- b. Serve means thinking about others, working on their behalf, and delivering something they want, need or value.
- c. So the two questions: Who do you serve? and What value do you serve them? Jack Welch, GE CEO..."We want a company that focuses on nothing but serving customers." Understanding all their needs is what success is.
- d. "Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value." Albert Einstein Expertise, Understanding, Information, Entertainment, Solving Problems...all have value.
- e. Serving others will give you a rich life. The Formula for getting rich:
  - (1) Do what you love
  - (2) Serve others what they love
  - (3) Get money in return
- f. Put yourself in other peoples' shoes. See their perspective. "If there is one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view, and see things from that person's angle, as well as from your own." Henry Ford
- g. Listen to the people you serve. We all should become professional listeners. People don't listen because it is hard work. Set aside your ego and focus on others. Bend over backwards to help the people you serve.

## 8. Persist

- a. Louis Pasteur, "My strength lies solely in my tenacity." Persistence must be important since we have so many words for it: perseverance, tenacity, endurance, stamina, determination, stick to it, hang in there, etc.
- b. "Persist mean the ability to keep going through failure, pain, rejection, criticism, negativity, and crap - not to mention all the bad things we encounter."

- c. Persist through time. In the age of instant gratification, we expect things quickly. Success takes 10 years according to this author's research. In networking we talk about 2-5 years. So why is it most quit in less than 1 year?
- d. There is no overnight success. Tiger Woods started golfing at about three. Sky Dayton, founder of Earthlink, started with a window washing business, a candy store, a couple of coffee houses, a computer graphics company. So, it doesn't happen overnight.
- e. Persist through failure. "Failing doesn't stop you. Quitting stops you. Persevere and don't be afraid to fail. You can afford to fail over and over again, because there will always be many, many more opportunities to succeed." Gerry Schwartz, CEO Onex.
- f. Think of failure as a little detour on your way to success. Make failure your school, not your funeral.
- g. To succeed a lot fail a lot. Failures happen...they could be your ticket to success.
- h. Persist through mistakes. Each wrong way leads us to the right way. Each mistake is like a compass. How many mistakes have you made today? "Sorry that's not enough."
- i. Persist through criticism. Deflect destructive criticism and accept constructive.
- j. Persist through rejection. Think of rejection as badges of honor. Allow the rejection to inspire you.  
Take small steps..."life is hard by the yard but by the inch it is a cinch." Quincy Jones  
Most successful people have "quitophobia." Fear of quitting...don't give up just because it is hard.
- k. Bounce ability: "They say successful people have thick skin, but based on my research it's more like they have rubber skin. They just keep bouncing back from failure and adversity."