



# **Your Road Straight to Success**

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# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter I: Introduction on Success.....</b>	<b>2</b>
A sense of purpose leads to happiness.....	2
Personal Development for Prosperity .....	3
<b>Chapter II: Improving for Success.....</b>	<b>5</b>
How to manage your schedule and stay stress free.....	5
Top 10 Time Management Skills .....	6
There is no “I” in TEAM: Team Building Basics .....	7
Teach Yourself Effective Public Speaking.....	8
Improving Your Listening Skills .....	9
Learn How to Say No .....	11
Avoiding Temptations to Live a Better Life .....	12
<b>Chapter III: How to Be Successful.....</b>	<b>14</b>
How to be successful in life .....	14
Making the right decisions.....	15
Use a hobby to become successful.....	16
Why you need to think like a success to be a success.....	17
Improve yourself by going outside your comfort zone .....	18
Why you need to go out on a limb to be a success .....	19
Learning discipline for a healthier lifestyle.....	20
Think your way to becoming rich .....	21
Count your blessings.....	22

## Chapter I: Introduction on Success

### A sense of purpose leads to happiness

Having a sense of purpose in your life goes a long way to helping you feel confident, secure and happy. A sense of purpose can be brought about by anything in life, it can be related to your career, bringing up a family or doing voluntary work. It is all about fitting in and feeling you are making a difference in life, that you are achieving something and getting somewhere.

If you have a sense of purpose in life you have something to look forward to everyday, a reason for getting up out of bed in the morning with a smile, it makes you feel good on the outside and so good on the inside. It leads to a more confident person who is happy with their position in life.

Younger people very often have no problem developing a purpose in life, they are just starting out and the majority of them have exams to pass, careers to start building, meeting the opposite sex, dating, marrying and eventually starting their own families. The majority of the younger generation has a lot to look forward to and so have a sense of purpose in life.

However the older we get, uncertainty can set in and we can start wondering about our purpose in life. Perhaps the children have grown up and are no longer dependant on you. Relationships break up or we reach retirement age and no longer have our work as a purpose in life.

The older generation then has to develop a new sense of purpose in life, luckily there are many ways you can achieve this, and here are some of the more common ones.

- Take up a new hobby and do something you have always wanted to do but have never had the time before.
- Join a social club, there are many social clubs which let people of the same age group meet on a regular basis and enjoy coffee and chatting. A lot of these groups have activities you can take part in and outings to attend.
- Join an exercise group either locally or at a gym, there are various types of exercise you can take part in without being too strenuous. Swimming meets are a great idea for the older person.
- Take up a sport such a tennis or bowling e.t.c.
- Visit family and friends on a regular basis and have them come over for dinner
- Take up some voluntary work for a few hours every day, it gives you a sense of purpose and gets you out of the house.
- Take a part time job that you can adequately cope with for a few hours per week.

- Take a walk in the park and say hello to passers by, very often you will meet other people who are in the same boat as you; you can make new friends just about anywhere.
- Visit a dating agency and get back into meeting the opposite sex again, it's never too late to start a relationship.

## **Personal Development for Prosperity**

Developing yourself spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically can lead to a happier life, personal development largely depends on mastering a few basic skills and implementing them into your life. The basics of personal development are managing your time more successfully, setting realistic goals, understanding yourself and building self-worth and self-esteem and having a purpose in life.

In order to gain personal development it is essential that you know who you really are, while this might sound silly, very few people realize their true self-worth and what they are capable of achieving. Only by realizing the difference you make to the world, what holds you back from achieving what you want out of life and how to fully develop yourself to reach what you want, can you then begin to develop.

### **Changes don't happen overnight**

Any changes that you make are going to require time and effort on your part; they won't happen overnight simply because you want to change. You must set your mind to devoting your efforts to what you want to change and develop and focus on them until you get there.

As mentioned before if you want to develop yourself then you have to have a solid base from which to work from, you have to be aware of whom you are. Once you discover this it brings a whole new meaning and purpose to life, by taking a long deep look at ourselves we discover everything there is to know and we bring out our creative side more. We open the door to our intuition and let go of our imagination, which many of us don't use to its full extent, and we are able to develop these feelings.

### **Key points to personal development**

The key points to personal development are include: knowing what it is you want from life and how you will achieve it, breaking free from your beliefs that you have limits and letting go of thoughts and emotions that have held you back, becoming more in tune with yourself and letting your intuition and creative side out, understanding why you make a difference, and successfully changing your thoughts, feelings and way of thinking so you can continue expanding.

As young children we don't hold back or deny ourselves anything as we are growing, and due to this we continue to grow and develop from a child into an adult. We continually learn and adapt and better ourselves. Young children

don't seem to have the fears that we develop as adults, life is so much simpler and easier to cope with and deal with, a child's mind is open and they continually use their imagination and intuition, they are not afraid of what they can and cannot do. It is only when we reach adulthood we hold ourselves back and make things complicated, we still use our mind but we use it the wrong way, we turn it in on ourselves.

## **Chapter II: Improving for Success**

### **How to manage your schedule and stay stress free**

In today's busy world staying on top of things and being able to successfully manage your schedule is essential if you want to remain stress free, a schedule is all about planning your day more efficiently which ultimately ensures that you get everything accomplished that you wish to. The most efficient way to do this is to list your time and tasks in order of priority and determine what top priority is and to set out goals in your life that you want to accomplish.

#### **Determining goals and priorities**

In order to be able to manage your time more efficiently and get the most out of your day you must be able to be in control of your life and decide exactly what it is that you want out of life and what you need to do in order to reach what you want. The next decision is managing your priorities efficiently; you do this by determining what is more important to you. The next step is analyzing what you do with your time by finding out exactly how much time you spend on a particular task in life, a journal will help you greatly with this part and you should make a list of your schedule and daily life and determine exactly how long you take on certain activities. Activities you should include could be working, studying, exercising, sleeping and relaxation, once you have done this you can then go on to evaluate the use of your time and determine the best schedule for making better use of it.

#### **Matching available time with your priorities**

In order to best manage your time and make your day more efficient you need to take a look at the detailed list you prepared and use your time to match your priorities. As well as taking into account the amount of time you actually spend on each task you should also ask yourself if you are spending enough quality time on a task. A good example of this would be that if you studying then are you studying when you are likely to take in more information or is studying fitted in whenever you can, if you are leaving studying until the end of the day then you are likely to be tired and wont concentrate as well as you would earlier on in the day.

#### **Tips for managing your time more efficiently**

- Break down large tasks into smaller ones and tackling each individual part one at a time can ease the stress considerably than facing one larger task
- Get rid of routine tasks, if a task is done just out of routine instead of necessity then eliminate it if possible.
- Look at your habits to see if they could be changed, maybe you could do certain things different ways and save yourself some time in the process.

- Evaluate yourself to determine if you are a morning person or night person and organize tasks to use whatever time suits you best.
- Learn to say the word “no” when asked to do something for someone, don’t be continually put upon by others who know you cannot refuse them, its ok doing favors but it can take considerable time from your day.

## **Top 10 Time Management Skills**

The secret to managing time successfully is being able to manage yourself, although we often think we don’t waste a minute of our time in reality this is far from true and there are many ways which we can manage ourselves more efficiently which ultimately leads to more successful time management. In order to successfully manage time there are strategies which you can use to stay more in control and relieve stress which plays a big factor in successful time management.

1. Attempting to do too much – in today’s busy world many people want things done yesterday and this only leads to rushing around and not doing a task properly, it also leads to mistakes and half-finished work with no real feeling of having accomplished anything with your time.
2. A lack of priorities – this is the single biggest cause of time wasting, in order to successfully manage time we have to know exactly what our priorities are for the day, by not prioritizing we spend too much time on the minor things and not enough time on the important ones.
3. Interruptions – we all get interruptions in our day, this could be someone dropping in and asking if you have a minute to spare, which usually turn into a half hour or more. Knowing how to successfully deal with interruptions in your daily life is essential to time management.
4. Procrastination – thinking about what you have to do instead of actually getting on and doing it is one of the biggest time wasters in your day, reduce the amount of time that you spend thinking and this leaves you more time for doing.
5. Learn to say “no” - many of us just cannot say the words “no” when asked if we mind doing something, this is usually out of fear of upsetting the other person, but if you are taking on the responsibilities of others then you are taking time away from your own workload or tasks and essentially robbing yourself of that precious time which leads to stressing you out.
6. Clutter – look around your desk or workspace, do you know where everything is? If you are asked for a file can you lay your hands on it or do you have to go rummaging to find it?, a cluttered desk or workspace is a time waster.
7. Set deadlines for yourself – work out a reasonable deadline for a particular project and make sure that you stick with the deadline.
8. Manage your e-mails and phone calls - where possible manage when you read your e-mails and take phone calls better, this was you are not continually breaking off to answer a call or reply to an e-mail. Set aside

certain times when you check your e-mail and reply to them, the same applies to phone calls, it is surprising how much time can be wasted throughout a day by stopping and starting a project or task.

9. Use an activity planner – setting your day out in a planner can help you save time, a planner will allow you to allocate tasks to time slots and this way you can plan your day out and maximize your time more efficiently.
10. Avoid multi-tasking – starting many different projects at the same time is not a very efficient way of managing time, try to complete one project before starting out on another, this gives you the satisfaction of seeing the project complete and knowing you have accomplished something with your time.

## **There is no “I” in TEAM: Team Building Basics**

Team building is important for home life with your family team and in business with your work team. What a team effort does is place the focus on the many and not the individual. Let's take a closer look.

What a Team is:

Teams work together for one common goal. A team has one aim. They have a common goal for which every teammate has shared responsibility for completing and meeting that one goal. Everyone in the team understands the goal and is highly committed to it. To improve teamwork you simply must make sure that everyone on your team understands the goal and are all committed to meeting that goal.

How to Improve Teamwork:

Make sure that at all times everyone in your team understands the common goal and is fully committed to it. Without any of this in place, your team and the goal is in danger. You can make sure your team is working together by:

1. Making sure the team's goals are clear
2. Making sure everyone in the team feels ownership and commitment to the goal
3. Ridding the team of anything that is inhibiting them from reaching the goal

A team is then working together, not as individuals, but as a whole to meet one common goal.

Types of Teams and Team Members:

Individual – A great team player is someone who is self-disciplined, likes to work and accomplish things. The team leader must take this person and help them meld into a team to work with other people and not just as one.

Small Teams – Small teams can be difficult because the team might overall feel as though they are inadequate. The team leader must help them see that they are not, and can work towards one common goal. In small teams, individual personalities and inhibitors can easily effect the rest of the individuals in the team. This is where the team leader needs to immediately address these issues and resolve them within the team.

Team Islands – Team islands, is of course a group of many different teams. The team leader should make sure that each team island respects the other teams. The team leader must make sure that although they are different teams that they can work together when they need to.

Large Teams – Large teams don't often have that many problems, as there are so many people working towards the same goal. No one feels that they should "make waves" in such large teams, they would rather work as a team and accomplish their goals. When a new employee comes into the team their behavior might be different than everyone else's, but they will soon meld into the team's behavior with the team leader's help.

So, in conclusion, a team consists of a group (small to large) of people who are committed to meeting one common goal. The team leader must keep their team motivated to achieve that goal. The team leader must make sure the goal is clear to everyone on the team, be able to find inhibitors and remove them, and therefore keep their team working towards the same goal with understanding and respect for one another.

## **Teach Yourself Effective Public Speaking**

As a first-time public speaker, you may have a terrible fear gripping you at the very thought of standing in front of an eager crowd. Your legs shake. Your hands shiver. Your throat dries up. Your tongue gets frozen. Your mind becomes blank. You probably feel a little nauseous. Really, you would rather die than be there because that seems like the only relief. The good news is that you aren't alone in your fear. Most public speakers have been fearful when they began. They simply persisted and learned to overcome the fear. You can too.

Learn to woo your crowds, before they boo you. This you may do successfully by getting to know the members of your audience. Find out about those that have come to hear you. You may have to do a little bit of research to know their average age, education or their level of awareness of the subject you have chosen for your speech and so on. It is also important to gauge their mood.

Understand what message they want you to deliver. Learn how best to package that message in your speech. Design your speech to suit the level as well as the mood of your audience. Choose the most suitable words and

expressions possible. Think about appropriate body language to fortify your speech. Establish and maintain eye contact with the audience. If you do, people will pay better attention to your speech. Intersperse it with a few spicy or humorous anecdotes to make it interesting. Remember if the crowds think you are a bore, you may hear them snore. In certain circumstances, encouraging audience participation will do the trick of beating boredom.

### **Speech organization**

Effective speeches are always organized very well. You must have a catchy beginning, an informative middle and a stimulating closing. The opening of your speech should be such as to rivet the attention of the audience. Remember that the closing will decide the degree of success of your speech. However, the bulk of your speech lies in the body, the middle, where the main points and sub-points are presented. In the end, a brief summary of the speech will have to round it off. The end is just as important as the beginning because it is what the crowds take home with them as they leave.

### **Preparing yourself**

Writing down your speech, revising it to your satisfaction, rehearsing it systematically and, standing in front of a mirror or imaginary crowds, delivering it are a few of the steps you can take in order to ensure your success as a public speaker. The better prepared you are with your speech; the higher will be your chances of facing your audience fearlessly. Also, it will help you to give a more effective and impressive speech.

Do proper ground-work and arm yourself with appropriate preparation. The more prepared you are, the more confidence and less fear you will have. You will be able to stand in front of large audiences and captivate them with your well-rehearsed speech. You will receive your reward for your labor when they stand up and clap and applaud.

## **Improving Your Listening Skills**

In order to be able to communicate successfully with others we have to develop our listening skills, truly listening to what someone is saying and understanding them is the key to effective communication. While the majority of us think we listen to what others are saying, in fact very few of us actually do listen intently and this is where misunderstandings can arise, which leads to difficulties and sometimes arguments.

Most of us has, over the years developed poor listening habits and have continued through life with these habits, some of the most common habits that people have developed which leads to poor listening skills include.

- Listening without really hearing what the other is saying, which often leaves us missing the point

- We allow other influences around us to distract us and drift away from the conversation
- We pretend we are listening when in fact we are thinking of something else and only hear snatches of what is being said
- Very often start out listening then if we think we know what is being said, interrupt the person before they have finished talking
- A person can often hear what they want to hear, or what they think they should be hearing which is often very different from what is actually being said
- We often assume we know why something is being said and jump on the defensive side
- We can't wait for an opportunity to butt into the conversation with our own point of view

These are the most common mistakes that many of us make when it comes to listening, or rather, not listening. However by realizing your mistakes and attempting to change them you are more likely to be aware of your mistakes, and this makes changing bad habits easier. To develop positive and effective listening habits you should follow the following tips.

- Even if what the talker is saying is boring, you really have to force yourself to listen intently to what they are saying and not be tempted to drift away into your own world. As well as focusing on what they are saying, watch their body language such as eye contact, hand movements and head nods.
- Listen to everything they are saying even if this means acknowledging the unpleasant or what you don't particularly want to hear.
- Try not to draw any conclusion before you have heard everything the person is saying to you, don't butt into the conversation before they have finished by guessing what they are going to say.
- Question the speaker in a non-judgmental way, by asking questions in this manner you will very often find that what the speaker has in mind and what you assumed are two different things.
- When unsure ask them directly if what you think is actually what they meant, this can very often alleviate or stop any misunderstandings from occurring.

The more you practice improving your listening skills the easier it becomes until you develop these new habits as second nature. You will then find that you get along with people easier and are less likely to get into conflicts through misunderstandings.

## Learn How to Say No

Generally speaking, people can't say no to someone asking them for something because they are so worried about upsetting the person or lack the courage to turn down the request. People often dislike disagreeing, or believe saying yes is easier than saying no. Others can simply not say no. However, there are often instances where it is best to say no to a request and it is important to learn how to utter that small little word, "no."

Adopt simple strategies to say no, politely but firmly. You don't need to cook stories up in order to refuse. You don't need to offer lame excuses. You can say no without being dishonest.

Look at some of the umpteen ways you can say no:

- No
- I can't accept this, with my present commitments. I'm sorry.
- I'm rather quite busy now. I must decline.
- I don't think I have the time for it, as I am in the middle of something important.
- After looking at my calendar, I found that I already have prior commitments.
- No. I would only be able to do a mediocre job right now.
- No. I don't have any spare time right now.
- Not this time, please give me more notice next time and I'll work it into my schedule.
- I can't.
- Why don't you try someone else? I'm not the right person for this..

There are a hundred other ways of saying no without feeling uneasy or hurting others by being blunt or even rude. If you aren't sure, you can always ask for time to make the decision without feeling guilty. You may say you will have to think about it. If somebody persists with the request when you want to say no, you may have to be assertive and firmly decline. You don't need to risk over committing by saying yes when you actually want to say no.

In extreme cases, people unable to say no to their bosses, who demand much more work than they can reasonably manage to do within a specified time, end up either not doing the job at all or doing it poorly. In either case, they are

unnecessarily putting their jobs on the line. If you can show your boss, the reasons for not being able to accept the extra responsibility, you may be able to convince your superior about your inability to accept the additional work. You can perhaps make a list of all the projects that have already filled your plate. Perhaps you can suggest alternative strategies or others whose workload is lower or competence levels higher for accomplishing that particular piece of work. In any case, don't accept anything that puts your job at risk or makes you suffer later.

Undoubtedly, learning to say no is a must have skill for everyone. Saying no at the right time can help you to gain respect with your peers and help avoid bitterness from those to have to hear it.

## **Avoiding Temptations to Live a Better Life**

Although life to some extent has gotten better with advancements in technology over the past few years in a way we have taken steps backward also, we now have the internet available to us 24/7 which gives us access to a wide range of entertainment that we didn't have years ago. TV sets have got bigger and we can gain access to R rated movies with the click of a button, video games have took off in a huge way and children are now running around in their virtual world brandishing guns, knives, bombs and going on killing sprees in extremely gory detail.

Everyday the newspapers splash headlines of murders, robbery and rapes but is there any wonder when we are constantly being bombarded and tempted with movies, games and some of the things the World Wide Web has to offer.

Sure we can choose not to watch the movies, not to play the games or to delve into the seedier parts of the World Wide Web, but the temptation is there and not everyone can resist, we all know that temptation is just that, if we think we shouldn't do something then we cannot resist doing it or taking a peek, if nothing else but out of curiosity. But does it hurt us, can what we see or do really influence us in our actions in life, some of course argue that yes it does, being continually bombarded with violence and sex can change how we think and feel so the possibility of it gradually beginning to affect our thoughts, feelings and actions is extremely likely.

If violence is portrayed as being fun in video games then aren't children getting the wrong idea? When younger people, particularly girls, see size 0 women parading on the catwalk are they going to eat that healthy balanced meal that you put in front of them or are they going to nibble on a lettuce leaf to shed yet more weight?

The Internet allows us to parade our lives for all the world to see by way of blogs and chat rooms, would we leave our front door wide open and encourage strangers to walk in off the street? Only a fool would do that yet we

allow not only our children unrestricted access to the net but we also do it ourselves. We write blogs, fill in profiles, post photos of ourselves and where we live, we even put our phone number down on the profile sometimes, while there are many good uses of the Internet such as bringing families and loved ones closer together, it can also be used by the spider cunningly faking, just sitting and waiting to draw some unsuspecting person deeper into their web of lies and deceit and then when all seems well, will strike with sometimes deadly force. Advancements in technology aren't bad, its how these advancements are used that is the problem and the type of person we can become from using them constantly, we have to avoid temptation if we are to live a better life in the future.

## Chapter III: How to Be Successful

### How to be successful in life

We all want to be successful in life but what can we do to assure that success, succeeding in life isn't as hard as you might think, there isn't any secret to it but rather just common sense, positive thinking and attitude and initiative. Along with this knowledge and understanding here are some tips to guide you down the path of success.

- Persevere – perseverance and determination are what is needed for success, if you don't give up at something you attempt then you can't fail, it's as simple as that. If something doesn't work out as planned the first time then try and try again using different methods to achieve the result that you are looking for.
- Change – if you are not happy with what you have now, or who you are in life then the only one that can make a difference to your situation or life is you. A change could mean changing your outlook on life, your outlook on yourself, your priorities or your activities, you have no one else to blame but yourself and only you have the power to change.
- What goes around comes around – you only get back in life what you are willing to put into it, if you are helpful, honest, truthful and positive then you will get the same back in return which can help you on your path to success particularly in the workplace.
- You cannot succeed alone – all successful people rely in part on others for their success, every person has different skills, talents and abilities which when combined leads to an individual's success.
- Center yourself – we all need to take time out during the day to center ourselves, by re-focusing ourselves and what we wish to achieve we are able to accomplish more and be more effective in our tasks.
- Set yourself targets or goals – setting out targets or goals for yourself can help you to succeed in anything you choose, these can be daily, short term or long term targets with short term being a month or so and long term no longer than 6 months. Always set realistic targets and give yourself a date by which to reach your target, review your targets on a regular basis to make sure they are always attainable.
- Don't strive for perfection – never try to be perfect, no one is perfect, set a standard and goal and do the task or job to the very best of your ability and be happy with that, as long as you gave it your best shot that's all you or anyone else can ask for.
- Believe in yourself – develop strategies which make you more aware of yourself and what you are capable of achieving, if you believe in yourself and what you are capable of achieving then you are more likely to be successful in whatever you do.
- Focus on what you want – focus on the positive and what it is you want to achieve instead of the negative or what it is that you don't want to

achieve, always look ahead instead of back and focus only on the desired end result.

## **Making the right decisions**

Some of us find it easy to make decisions while others tend to procrastinate a lot when it comes to making decisions - particularly if they are important ones that could alter the pathway of our life. When making decisions in life changing situations it can be hard for everyone, after all the choice you make will affect your life and the route you choose to go might not be easily reversible or impossible to change. If we stop and look back on some of the biggest moments in our life that went wrong, we find that our biggest regrets come from faulty decision-making. Perhaps we went with our gut instinct when making a decision or we let ourselves be swayed by others, there are many reasons why we make the wrong decisions in life and almost everyone will have made the wrong decision at some time in their life. Here are some tips to help you with decision-making.

- Remember when making a decision, no decision is right or wrong, decisions are merely making a choice among alternatives.
- Always avoid making a snap decisions about something, if a decision is easily reversible then you can move fast on it while irreversible ones should be thought out.
- Jot down notes when making a decision, write down all solutions and include all relevant information, by seeing it written down in black and white sometimes the answer is staring you in the face.
- Write down all the pros and cons of the decision you make, it can help clarify your decision or help you to see any problems the decision might have.
- Make one decision at a time, never allow decisions to build up and force yourself to make them all at once.
- If others will be affected by your decision then get their input on the situation.
- Make a decision and stick with it, you have to recognize that you cannot know with 100% certainty that it is the right one but once made stick with it.
- Before following a decision through ask yourself what if anything could go wrong if you followed through with this choice.
- Once you have committed yourself to your decision then go with it whole-heartedly, let go of all the "what ifs" and do not bother yourself anymore.
- Visualize your decision in your head and follow it through in your mind, visualize all outcomes of the decision before actually following it through.
- Put faith in your ability to make a successful decision and your ability to follow it through.

- Review all the facts thoroughly before you make a decision, once you have reviewed them allow yourself to time to think about them before drawing a conclusion and determining your decision from the facts.
- Always try to base your decisions on what is right or feels the right thing to do.
- Remember to look at the objective of the decision, the alternatives to the decision and the risks of any alternatives to the decision.

## **Use a hobby to become successful**

Almost everyone has a hobby; a hobby is something which you take pleasure from doing and relieves boredom, stress and keeps you occupied in your spare time, however you can take some hobbies and develop them into successful businesses. Some people have started out with a hobby and built up a very successful business from the ground up by doing something that they, although some hobbies more than others naturally have more potential to thrive and expand. There are some points to consider when you are thinking of turning your hobby into a business.

### **Do you have the commitment?**

While your hobby is something which you enjoy doing now in your spare time, would you have the commitment needed to stick with it if you were doing it full time, what's more do you have the time needed to commit to make a business work? Doing something when you feel like it for fun is a totally different thing than if you are relying on it for an income.

### **Financing**

You will have to determine how much it is going to take to finance your hobby as a business and get it off the ground, how will you finance it is an important point to consider along with your knowledge of running a business in general. Do you have a head for business or are you going to need any help and how much help will you need and what is it going to cost?

### **Business management courses**

If you have a head for business then you may need to take a business management course, while you may have what it takes and the know how to manage a business successfully you may need to get qualifications or learn skills in order to run your business successfully.

### **Attracting customers**

If you are going to successfully turn your hobby into a thriving business then it is essential of course that people know about you and what you are offering, therefore you have to think about widening your customer base. The Internet provides an excellent opportunity to widen your customer base internationally; the Internet delivers what you have to offer to millions of people around the world by advertising your business on your own website. Some knowledge of coding is needed and you may have to hire someone to work with you to

design and plan your site and not only that you then have to get it out on the web by way of promoting it on search engines and buying advertising space.

### **Preparing yourself for success**

If all goes according to plan and you have thought your plan through your new business will bloom and blossom into a success, when this happens you will have to be prepared for the transformations that will take place. If your business expands then it may become too large for a one man operation and then you will be faced with a whole new set of problems to contend with such as finding bigger premises, hiring extra staff and meeting greater demand.

### **Why you need to think like a success to be a success**

Being successful is all about being positive and if you think of success and being successful, this builds up self-confidence and positive thinking and this is the combination which is needed in order to get the most out of life and succeed in life. Whatever it is that you wish to achieve out of life, be it in work or your personal life the key to actually succeeding is believing in yourself and your ability to accomplish whatever it is you want to do. Thinking success leads to success, everything that happens around us is dependant on how we think and what we think, learning how to think positively is the key to learning how to think successfully and once you start to think successfully you have the power to change almost any aspect of your life.

### **Shaping your life**

Every thought we have shapes our lives and determines to an extent the outcome of a situation, if we go into something thinking negatively then the outcome will be so different than had we gone into the same situation thinking more positively. The way we think and talk to ourselves determines how we go into a situation and simply by changing the way we think can change the outcome of that situation. When we fail in a situation this is largely down to our self-limiting thoughts, negative thoughts that we have allowed to creep in and brings us to feel that we cannot possibly succeed. In order to change our circumstances or the outcome of a situation we have to change the way our brain thinks, which then changes our outlook and in turn alters the situation into a more positive one.

Success is not something which can only be gained by a very few individuals who hold a magical key that others don't possess, the power to be a success is in us all we just have to realize this and learn how to alter our way of thinking to genuinely believe that we are able to achieve and be successful in whatever we do. When we start to alter our way of thinking into a more positive approach to situations and tasks you will gradually begin to shape your life in the way you want it to go, one excellent way to begin changing our pattern of thought is to use daily affirmations. These are simply statements which are tailored for any particular situation or task which are repeated throughout the day either out loud or quietly to yourself, they help to retrain your brain and your way of thinking into this new more positive approach to

life. Basically the only thing stopping you from being a success in whatever you do is yourself, or to be more precise your thoughts, negative thoughts lead to negativity and positive thoughts lead you right down the pathway to success and beyond. In short think like a success and there is no doubt that you will be a success in any aspect of your life.

## **Improve yourself by going outside your comfort zone**

Your comfort zone is exactly what it sounds like, places or situations where you feel comfortable in, while there is nothing wrong with comfort zones in order to expand our potential and succeed in life we sometimes have to move out of our comfort zone and into unfamiliar territory. Only by pushing ourselves to do something new or which we are afraid of can we develop and improve ourselves. The first step to take in venturing outside of your comfort zone is to decide what it is you wish to change about yourself or your life, the way you wish to go forward. Make a list of everything that you want to do or change what you'd like to accomplish, the places you would like to visit and what it is you want out of life. When you have determined your goals and objectives you can then take the next step in making them reality. Here are just some of the ways in which you can step outside your comfort zone.

### **Your self-image**

How long is it since you last changed your appearance, for example how long have you had the same hairstyle? You can begin stepping outside your comfort zone by making changes to your self-image, try a different hairstyle, maybe a different color, and change the color of your make-up, shave off your beard or grow one, choose a different style of clothing than you would normally wear or alter the color. There are many ways which you could make small alterations to your self-image to give yourself a new look and a new look at life, stop and think if you are doing everything you possibly can to look and feel your best and give yourself a confidence boost by making positive changes to your self-image.

### **Do something different**

Make it a weekly goal to do something completely different to what you would normally do; this can be anything just to get you out of the rut you have put yourself in and to widen your comfort zone at least one day a week. Start off with making smaller changes at first, go to a different restaurant for lunch, and order something from the menu which you have never tried; there are many ways you can make gradual small changes to your daily life.

### **Take up a new hobby**

Take up a new hobby in life, join a weekly meeting group such as dieting, a book club or wine tasting, choose something which is out of character and which will get you meeting new people and going to new places. Doing something different every week and gaining a new interest is an excellent way of moving out of your comfort zone.

### **Meet your fears head on**

Change is always frightening when we first step out into the unknown, but we can only improve upon ourselves and our lives by meeting and greeting our fears head on and passing through the fear, once we have met it head on we find it isn't so frightening after all. So do something that scares you every week.

### **Why you need to go out on a limb to be a success**

If you want to be successful in life, it is important that you push yourself every step of the way throughout life, never just sit back and rest on your laurels and be content with what you have achieved so far in life. You should continually be looking for ways in which you can improve your life and yourself to achieve and get more from life, develop yourself to your full potential and beyond. Think of yourself as tree, the tree starts out as a sapling growing upward and expanding outward, continually branching out in all directions, and laying strong foundation roots deep underground, trees never stop growing and neither should you. Continually pushing yourself throughout life and going out on a limb is the key to being a total success in whatever you choose to do with your life.

### **Know what you have in life**

The first step you should take is to determine what you already have in your life, for example what are your best qualities, what are your particular talents and how could you develop further? Sit down and write an honest assessment of yourself in order to be able to expand on personal improvement. If you think that you might not be honest with yourself then ask family members or friends to give you some insight, but above all be totally honest with yourself in all areas, improvements can only be made if you can find ways in which to improve or branch out. Determine what it is you want to expand upon or develop in your life, the areas which could be better, where you could improve and what skills if any you need to learn in order to be able to accomplish your goals.

### **Take small steps**

Once you have determined the areas in which improvements can be made the next step is to follow these through, however don't go rushing off taking huge giant steps and hope to better yourself quickly, the key to success in by taking one small step towards your goal at a time.

### **Reassess your situation**

From time to time along the way reassess your situation to make sure you are still going in the right direction, it is better to find you are wandering off track early than to go stumbling along and end up totally losing the direction and way you intended to go. If you are expanding on several areas of your life at once and have several goals in motion then it is helpful if you keep a written journal of your goals and achievements, this way you can keep track and see just how far you have come forward.

### **Reward yourself for your achievements**

Always make sure you reward yourself for your achievements along the way but never stop pushing yourself onward to further success, when you succeed at something and accomplish a goal then enjoy what you have accomplished and the pride you must feel. Rest your weary bones for a short while and enjoy the feelings then get yourself back up on your feet and continue down the long pathway to success, never missing a turn in the road ahead which takes you deeper into success.

### **Learning discipline for a healthier lifestyle**

We can all benefit from having discipline in our lives, discipline helps us tell wrong from right as children when growing up and when we reach adulthood we still benefit from being self-disciplined. Self-discipline helps us to lead a happier, healthier lifestyle when used in many aspects of life, it is when we allow ourselves to do just as we please, that things start going wrong and our health suffers.

Self-discipline isn't about denying yourself, it is about making wise choices for our own benefit, the food we eat everyday and the amount of exercise we do is dependant on how disciplined we are with ourselves. While we all understand that the choices we make comes down to how healthy we are, we don't always make the wisest choices, and while this is ok every now and again if we lose all self-discipline it soon starts to show on our health and probably our waistline too.

Very often we make pacts with ourselves to start leading a healthier lifestyle and start making changes, this usually occurs at the start of the New Year as a resolution. While some stick to their guns and do make changes and keep up with those changes, the majority of us fall short and go back to our old ways. Being self-disciplined isn't easy, it takes a lot of willpower, especially if you need to make many changes to your lifestyle, but it's not impossible.

Here are some tips to help you stay on course and develop more self-discipline in all aspects of your life.

- Understand that the choices you make in life are yours and yours alone, you can't blame others for your failure if you lack self-discipline
- If you make mistakes in life, learn by them, pick yourself up and practice being more self-disciplined with yourself in the future
- Set yourself goals that are realistically achievable, once you have written out your goals make sure that you do everything in your power to stick to them and achieve them. Goals go a long way to encouraging you to discipline yourself.
- Always finish any task you set about doing before moving on to start another

- Avoid temptation from others around you to deviate from what it is you want to achieve, they may lack self-discipline but don't be swayed to following their ways
- Taking up a new sport, particularly one that requires a lot of self-discipline to excel at is an excellent way of improving yourself
- Notice the benefits you have gained from practicing self-discipline, keeping a journal is an excellent way of achieving this
- Imagine the consequences that being un-disciplined brings
- Your willpower is at its lowest when you feel stressed so take it easy, learn how to relax
- Take notice of when and why you start to go off track and deviate, again a journal can help you to keep track of these times
- Use affirmations to help you in times when you are frustrated or doubt yourself

## **Think your way to becoming rich**

How we think goes a long way to how successful we are in life and we have the power to change our lives in every aspect including our finances. Simply by changing the way we think can change our outlook on our financial situation and while this alone will not make you a millionaire, it can greatly improve your situation and by believing that money can come to you will give it the opportunity to do so.

Have you ever stopped to think why those who are rich keep on getting richer; one of the reasons is that they think differently about money to those who have not got money. Negative thinking brings nothing but negativity and negativity will not bring money. However, thinking positively can change many situations in life and one thing the rich do is to always think positively. Here are some examples of the outlook and way of thinking that those with money have and what those without money think about the same situation.

**The average person** – If it sounds too good to be true then it probably is  
**The rich person** – It sounds interesting, please tell me a little more

While we should all be wary of scams, the rich person is more willing to seek out an opportunity to draw more money in than the person with little money, sometimes the saying “you have to spend money to make money” is true.

**The average person** – 95% of all new businesses fail within the first five years

**The rich person** – I better look into all aspects of the business and make sure I do my homework, if I want to run a successful business

Starting out with negativity in mind is not the best way to get your business up and running, providing you have looked into your new business project and

got advice there is no reason to think negatively about the prospects and success.

**The average person** – the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence

**The rich person** – there is a whole world of opportunities out there just waiting for me to discover them

The average person always allows themselves to think that they cannot do better and achieve what it is they want out of life, that only others can do that, by thinking negatively they are not giving themselves the opportunity to expand and are full of “what ifs” and “if only”

**The average person** - you have to have money in order to be able to make money

**The rich person** – you have to have a great idea in order to make money

While common sense dictates in some circumstances that to get your idea off the ground it can cost you money, a positive attitude towards the outlay of your money and the rewards it will bring you is the big difference between failure and success.

**The average person** – I tried that before and only failed, so it will again

**The rich person** – what do I have to do differently and change this time in order to for it to be a success

Again negativity comes into play; just because it didn't turn out as planned the last time doesn't mean that you should give up and not try again after sitting back and looking at the mistakes you made and altering for a different outcome.

All these thoughts have one thing in common a negative and a positive outlook on life and what you do with it, by simply changing your outlook you open up for yourself a whole new world and a whole lot more possibilities for you to change your financial situation.

## **Count your blessings**

We all moan and groan at sometime or another about our lives simply because no matter what we have in life we are never satisfied with and are always looking for something better. How often do we actually sit down and say thank you for what life has given us? For the majority of Americans, Thanksgiving day is about the only time when we think about what's actually important in life and why we should count our blessings. Happiness in life isn't about material possessions and money its about the small everyday things that so very often the majority of us take for granted, we are all blessed no matter what walk of life we come from, we all should count our blessings and say thank you for what we have instead of dwelling on what we don't.

### **Saying thank you**

From the moment you awaken you should give thanks for what you have, waking up beside your partner whom you cherish and love, turning to them and saying “thank you” makes a great start to the day, “thank you” for loving me, for being there for me, just for being you”. This is the person you worship and adore and who you are lucky enough to wake up beside every morning and this alone makes you one of the richest people on earth and is good enough reason to count your blessings each and every morning.

### **Blessings can be found in the smallest of things**

There are many things that happen throughout your day which we don't pay attention to but which are blessings and some can even occur as blessings in disguise. It is important to be more aware of what is happening in our lives and appreciate all the little things that can often pass us by without us giving them too much thought. Very often it is the smallest things in life that can bring the greatest joy to us, these are some of the highlights of our life that we should cherish and give thanks for each and every day.

### **List your blessings**

If you sit down and clear your mind and stop and think about what blessings you have in your life and aim to list 5 of them and you will undoubtedly start thinking about what you have in life you will be able to list a whole lot more than just 5. While you may think that you haven't anything to be thankful for, you will find if you think about it you are wrong, perhaps for you it's the sound of your grandchild or child's laughter and joy at spending time with you, it could be an unexpected phone call from a friend, lover, son, daughter, mother or father, just to say hi, sitting down to a family meal and swapping stories about your day went. All these are the little joys of life the ones that make life special and meaningful and which thanks should be said, they are the true blessings, it isn't about how much money you have in the bank, how big your wardrobe is, having the latest gadgets, or that new car. All of these things are merely material possessions and while they may bring a smile to our face and make us feel good they are not true blessings, sure it feels good be financially secure but if you aren't then it doesn't mean that you aren't rich in many other ways. In fact many people who are on the bread line are very often richer and are able to count many more blessings than those with a huge bank account.