

Taking Control of Your Own Destiny: Part 2 – The Success Process

By Wayne Wilson

Successful business owner/CEOs are like highly successful people in most other endeavors: they are control freaks; they want to control their own destiny. Their success is often based on an intuitive understanding of certain universal success principles.

These universal success principles fall into three groups or phases: preparation, process, and power. ¹ Part 1 of this series focused on the five principles of **preparing for success**:

- **Desire** is the great motivator.
- Your **beliefs** empower you.
- **Brainwash yourself** (before someone else does).
- **Dream** big dreams.
- **Multiple minds** matter. ²

But preparation alone will not bring you the success you desire; you must **ACT** on your dreams. And your actions must be part of an orderly and systematic process.

The success process includes these five precepts.

1. Think accurately.

Accurate thinking is the bedrock foundation on which the success process is built. It includes seeing the world as it really is rather than how you would like it to be. Accurate thinking requires that you carefully and honestly evaluate:

- Your goals
- The resources that are available to you
- What you are willing to give in return for the success you desire

Thinking accurately also requires that you see yourself as you really are with all of your strengths and weaknesses. Accurate thinking will help you to focus on your positive skills and traits, which will then power you to your goals.

2. Plan carefully.

Organized planning is essential to ensuring your success. Failing to plan is like taking a trip without a map. While few endeavors proceed exactly according to the original plan, a proper plan will lay out the general route to your destination while identifying key obstacles as well as possible detours and alternate routes. ³

A plan provides a flexible structure for your activities. It eliminates the daily question: “what should I do today?” A plan also limits downtime by re-directing you to secondary or back-up tasks on which to focus when a principal task is temporarily stalled.

Having a plan builds your confidence enabling you to take action. Indeed, the best plans are formulated as written Action Plans – what is to be done, how will it be done, when will it be done, and who will do it.

3. Take action.

The best-written plan in the world will be useless unless you take action. Nothing will happen until you DO SOMETHING – compile those facts, write that letter, call that person, make that sales pitch.

Taking action is invigorating – it warms the body and brightens the soul. You are on your way to achieving your goals and you can feel it in your bones. Taking action also sets other people and ideas in motion. And that positive energy will come back to you just like a boomerang returning to the hand of its thrower.

Taking action says to the world: “I know who I am; I know where I am going; and I am confident of reaching my objective.”

4. Learn from your mistakes.

Mistakes are part of the success process – don’t deny them or dwell on them but learn from them.

A ship captain at sea plots a course from his present location to his destination. If you were to plot his actual path after the fact, you would see a zigzag line as the ship periodically corrected its course to counter act the forces of currents and winds, which constantly push the ship from its intended course.

Your success plan will also require frequent course corrections as circumstances change and you learn what works and what does not. Acknowledging in advance that course corrections will be required enables you to timely recognize the need for a change in plan. And operating with a flexible plan empowers you to take corrective action promptly.

5. Stay the course.

Once you have clearly analyzed the terrain and set your course, persistence is the key to success – constantly visualizing your goal, adjusting your plan, and correcting your course, never wavering from your commitment.

Persistence is having the courage of your convictions – to act in accordance with your beliefs despite criticism, setbacks or other obstacles.

Napoleon Hill⁴ tells the story of a gold rush prospector from Baltimore who spent large sums of money buying land and digging for gold in the West. After years of work without finding gold, the prospector gave up, sold his claim and returned home in failure. The new owner hired a mining engineer who told him to keep digging. **A major gold strike lay just two feet beyond where the prospector had given up!**⁵

One of the most successful salesmen I have ever known was neither particularly smart nor well educated, but he had the persistence of the Energizer Bunny – he just keep going, and going, and going.

Commit yourself to **these five success precepts**, create your own success, and **take control of your destiny**.

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¹ This article is the second in a three-part series. A subsequent article will address the Power of Success.

² [Taking Control of Your Own Destiny: Part 1 – Preparing for Success](#), published in [Companies in Transition - July 2008](#).

³ Many widely used management techniques originated in the military. A classic example is embodied in the old proverb “**No battle plan survives contact with the enemy**” attributed to Prussian general [Helmuth von Moltke the Elder](#). Moltke believed that military strategy was really a system of options since only the beginning of a military operation could be planned. Moltke considered the main task of military leaders to be the extensive preparation of all possible outcomes. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helmuth_von_Moltke_the_Elder) While most business plans do not involve matters of life and death, flexibility and scenario simulation are hallmarks of any good plan.

⁴ A renowned writer, speaker, and lecturer, Hill was the author of the seminal work, [Think and Grow Rich](#), originally published in 1937.

⁵ As told by Napoleon Hill in [The Science of Personal Achievement](#)