

Taking Control of Your Own Destiny: Part 3 – The Power of Success

By Wayne Wilson

Successful people share many traits and characteristics. One common trait is that they want to control their own destiny. In Part 1 of this three-part series, we laid out several essential principles for taking control of your own destiny by actively **preparing for success**:

- **Desire** is the great motivator
- Your **beliefs** empower you
- **Brainwash yourself** (before someone else does)
- **Dream** big dreams and
- **Multiple minds** matter. ¹

Part 2 of the series focused on five key steps in **the success process**, all of which are necessary to achieving significant personal success:

- **Think** accurately
- **Plan** carefully
- **Take action**
- **Learn** from your mistakes and
- **Stay the course** ²

Achieving success is not just about “the attainment of wealth, favor or eminence.” ³ Success is also about “the achievement of one’s aims or goals,” and becoming “a person who achieves his or her goals.” ⁴ More importantly, success brings with it a certain level of flexibility and freedom which is the true **power of success**.

Here then are three important benefits that come from achieving significant success.

1. The view is better from the top of the mountain.

When we achieve significant personal success, we see the world in a larger context. Standing on the top of the mountain, we realize that the world is ever so much larger, richer, and more complex than the view we observed while standing on the valley floor. That sense of how little we truly know is both overwhelming and empowering.

With our vistas expanded, we can take advantage of the many options and choices available to us from the mountain top that were not available or apparent to us while we stood down in the valley below. There will always be more mountains to climb and more valleys to explore. Success is not a destination but rather a process, a journey, a state of being.

The hard, difficult work of climbing the mountain – of initially pursuing and achieving your goals – is rewarded by the grand view from the top of the mountain.

2. Choose where and how to live and work.

A second benefit of achieving significant personal success comes in being able to choose where and how you work and live rather than being at the mercy of someone else. While increasing numbers of professional writers, money managers, and other so-called knowledge workers telecommute to work at least part-time, some are more successful, and therefore more independent, than others.

True success comes in being able to work for yourself or to choose how, when, and whether you wish to work for others. Tom Peters, the author and advisor to global companies, continues to travel, speak, and write prolifically while living in southern Vermont. A successful New Hampshire CPA regularly divides his time between New Hampshire and Florida while maintaining a thriving specialized practice.

Alternatively, you may choose to take a different path through a second career, volunteer work, or some other variation of the traditional working life, which may be more valuable or meaningful to you. The power is in your ability to choose.

3. Work by leveraging what and who you know - without the heavy lifting.

Most people earn their living by trading their time for money. With a finite number of hours in the day and competition always pressing down on the available hourly rate, there is frequently limited opportunity for upside.⁵

Some years ago, Michael Goldhaber, writing in *Wired*, said, "If there is nothing very special about your work, no matter how hard you apply yourself you won't get noticed, and that increasingly means you won't get paid much either."⁶

On the other hand, achieving significant personal success means that people will often pay you money for **what you know or who you know** rather than what you do or how hard you work, especially if you have knowledge that few other people have. Even in the hourly billing professions,⁷ exceptional and highly accomplished practitioners command large incomes based on the value they provide to their clients through their expertise and proprietary knowledge rather than through charging hourly fees.

In the end, success is not necessarily about accumulating large sums of money or playing for the rest of your life; it's about having choices while avoiding the heavy lifting. As Napoleon Hill would say, "You have already earned the money (by virtue of your success) and now all you have to do is reach out and take some when you need it."⁸

Whatever you choose, remember that your time is limited and the meter is running – make the most of it.

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

² [Taking Control of Your Own Destiny: Part 2 – The Success Process](#), published in [Companies in Transition – October 2008](#)

³ Merriam Webster Online at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/success>

⁴ Wiktionary at <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/success>

⁵ Many, if not most, large fortunes were created by people who started and/or built significant businesses

⁶ Quoted by Tom Peters in [The Brand You50](#), 1999

⁷ Such as law and consulting

⁸ Paraphrased from Napoleon Hill in [The Science of Personal Achievement](#). A renowned writer, speaker, and lecturer, Hill was the author of the seminal work, [Think and Grow Rich](#), originally published in 1937.