

The Total Leader®



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Crystallize Your Thinking to Succeed

You have probably heard the common saying that there are three ways to acquire great wealth: to be born into it, to marry into it, or to earn it. Unlike wealth, success comes by only one path: you must earn it. You cannot be born into success; you cannot marry into it; it is never a matter of luck. True success involves the development of your potential for personal leadership and achievement, and that depends entirely upon you.

People have frequently sought the “secrets of success” by studying the words and actions of those who have been great leaders. For the most part, their search proves fruitless because they look only on the outer person rather than examining thoughts, habits, attitudes and emotions – the intangible ingredients that make those who succeed stand a little taller than average. But a careful study of these qualities reveals certain success essentials common to all those who have achieved major success. These qualities are called by different names, they are expressed in unique manners, and those who possess them may even be unaware that they have them. But these qualities are present. If you want to develop the self-motivation necessary for effective personal leadership, you must also acquire these five success essentials.

Crystallized Thinking

You must crystallize your thinking to identify the specific goals you want to achieve and to identify where you stand now in relation to those goals. Like most people, you have probably had serious moments of soul searching when you asked yourself exactly where you stood and what you wanted from life. But chances are you did not pursue these questions because the answers were vague, illusive and hard to pin down. It is not easy to know yourself because your personality is complex. Your motivation is subject to certain basic needs and drives that exert influence from inside yourself. You are also subject to many outside

pressures – to the conditioning influences of family, society, environment and institutions. But even your conditioned habits are fashioned by your own free choice, and that same freedom of choice directs your goals program.

Knowing yourself and where you want to go involves decision making. You must make a decision and stick to it. Crystallized thinking is the process that makes it possible for you to reach confident decisions about the goals you



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choose to pursue.

Success comes in the progressive realization of worthwhile predetermined personal goals, one after another. A basic part of knowing yourself is knowing your present status and knowing what you want to achieve. Once you have crystallized your thinking to produce a clear and concise analysis of your present position and have determined your own value system so that you have a vivid mental image of your goals, you are ready to take the next step toward achievement.

A Written Plan

After you have crystallized your thinking and know what goals you want to achieve, the next success essential is developing written plans and deadlines for achievement of those goals. Although you have chosen a star to shoot at, a goal line to cross, or a hurdle to overcome, you must have some plan of action for realizing your dream. Set out workable guidelines that elevate your goals above the realm of daydreams. Make plans so detailed and so clearly drawn that confusion and conjecture are eliminated. Then you can put theory into practice, turn theoretical knowledge into pragmatic know-how, and convert thought into action.

Written plans and deadlines for their achievement minimize procrastination. They create within you an inspirational discontent with things as they are. They help you clearly visualize each goal as an accomplished fact before it is actually achieved. Writing crystallizes thought, and crystallized thought motivates action. The mere fact that you put your goals on paper serves as an act of commitment.

A Burning Desire

The third success essential is to develop a burning desire for achievement of your goals. Desire makes the difference between a goal and a wish. Desire puts action into your plans and intentions. Without desire there is no motivation to achieve, no matter how worthy your goal nor how workable your plan.

Although you were born with the desire for leadership in its broad sense, you have also experienced a certain amount of conditioning that has, to some extent, hampered the flow of your creativity and desire. Rediscover the freshness, vitality, optimism and enthusiasm of the desire you possessed as a child – before you lost some of your capacity to dream impossible dreams and to desire so fervently that you could feel, taste and see a dream as your own. Stoke the fires of desire with emotion, stir them deeply, and you can achieve success in personal leadership.

In the process of discovering how to arouse, develop, and test your desire against your value system, you learn to judge whether the goals you have written are real goals or

mere daydreams. The intensity of your desire to achieve the goals you have listed determines their priority. Those you most desire will have the highest priority. They will operate as forces to provide you with dramatic self-motivation. Without desire, your goals are destined to remain unrealized.

Supreme Self-Confidence

Making the changes necessary for growth in personal leadership is difficult if you try to change conscious actions without changing attitudes and habits that automatically trigger behavior patterns. It is necessary to begin first to alter attitudes and basic habits of thinking as a key factor in activating your plan. When you are purposely working to develop success attitudes, you begin to believe that achievement of your goals is possible. You develop great self-confidence.

Self-confidence allows you to be realistic instead of dependent on vague hopes. When you are realistic, you do not wait for time and circumstances to come along and transform your dreams into reality. You take the lead and work progressively toward achievement; and most important, you have confidence in your own ability to lead, to grow, and to make the internal changes necessary to reach your objectives. You believe in the concept of continual change. You know that you are indeed a creature of change. Your response to new experiences is that they are natural and to be expected. They pose no threat to you.

Unshakable Determination

Develop an unshakable determination to follow through on your plan regardless of circumstances, criticism, or what other people say, think, or do. This is often the breaking point for good intentions. Many people live their lives in the shadow of public opinion, drifting with the tide of criticism, and wind up wallowing in the backwash of mediocrity. Set a realistic standard for yourself. No one else can determine your desires, needs, or wants because no one else knows your priority of values or understands your potential. Once you know yourself and set your goals accordingly, determination is natural because you know that you are right and you know why you are right. You have information no critic can ever have, and armed with this inside information, you are impervious to unjustified assaults. Determination is neither stubborn defiance nor unreasonable inflexibility. It is, rather, firm resolve, quiet confidence, and unshakable persistence.

These five success essentials are inherent in every great leader. Follow all of these five success essentials as a general plan for living and your proficiency in goal setting will increase by leaps and bounds.

Embrace Change

As a decision maker and problem solver, be prepared to risk change. Be willing to pay the price of disturbing your own psychological comfort by choosing to change. It may become necessary to defend yourself against traditional ways of thinking and acting, and you may have to do without social approval for a time. You may also encounter resistance, especially if you are young and new at the job. Not only do people instinctively resist change, they may actively insist that they are unable to learn a new procedure or change an old habit. When you believe in your decision, simply insist, even if you must do so repeatedly. As a leader, you are a role model. Remain calm and unemotional, but determined.

People will be more likely to accept change when they see you embracing it with enthusiasm. When they see you not only survive, but thrive, they will be more willing to take the risks associated with a given change. Let your team members know that change is inevitable, and your organization can capitalize on change to succeed.

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Utilize the Power of Delegation

A manager's primary responsibility is to get work done through other people, and the single most effective technique for achieving this purpose is delegation. Effective delegation is the act of giving someone else the responsibility and authority to carry out an assignment or to represent you or your organization in a specific role. In addition to sharing responsibility, delegation involves communication and training. When teamwork is at its best, effective delegation occurs. Practicing the art of delegation is a vital tool in your development as a leader and manager because of these key benefits:

1. You improve your personal time management, leveraging your energy and ideas.
2. You provide motivational and development opportunities for others on your team.
3. You maximize the interests, strengths, and contribution of others and increase the team productivity.
4. You make use of a valuable yet easily overlooked training tool – delegation!



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The definition of delegation can be expanded to include sharing of responsibilities with team members, other managers, or anyone with whom dividing responsibilities is appropriate and logical. The concepts used for traditional delegation apply with some modification when sharing responsibility. For example, some tasks within your work load may best be accomplished by counterparts of yours. Certain individuals may have special skills or knowledge, information, or relationships that make it more effective for them to complete the work. Keeping in mind the overall goal and being willing to share responsibility, as well as the credit, increases your success.

Effective delegation multiplies your efforts many times over by using the time, knowledge, experience, and creative power of other people. Effective delegation frees you for the planning, problem solving, and tracking required to build a more productive organization.

Choose Delegation Carefully

Choose carefully the team members to whom you delegate specific tasks, especially those you would like to train for the highest level of delegation. Explain your reason for delegating a piece of work, get a clear commitment from the person to perform the task, and provide adequate training and instruction. Evaluate the time required to perform the task and adjust work schedules or work load as needed.

Monitor regularly the responsibilities you have delegated and measure the progress of individual team members to keep them on track, to stay in touch, and to avoid wasted time and effort. To reap the benefits of delegation and also avoid the pitfalls, define the following degrees of freedom according to the situation: 1) Act and report routinely. 2) Act and report immediately. 3) Seek approval, then act. 4) Wait until told.

To increase your team's results, set a goal to move as many people as possible to the highest level of delegation. Delegation challenges the most promising, capable people on your team to develop their potential and to use more of their abilities. When they do, you and the organization are direct beneficiaries of their growth.

Build a Strong Foundation for Success

When you participate in leadership development training, you're building an imposing structure of success upon the firm foundation you've already laid. Your improved skills will enable you to get more done in less time and with less wasted effort. As you gain confidence to become more skillful, you will become increasingly valuable to the organization. Improved skills will also result in less stress related to your responsibilities, and you will find yourself enjoying your job even more. As you participate in further leadership development, you find your leadership increasingly influencing three areas: the organization overall, your most directly involved team members, and the work climate.

- ◆ Your influence in the organization. Organizations are much like human beings. Each copes with challenges in its own characteristic way, operates in a manner designed to preserve its existence, and resists change. An organization is simply two or more people working toward a common goal. Regardless of the size of your organization, filling your position of leadership calls for willingness to identify with your organization's purpose, to support it with your attitudes and your actions, and to facilitate the changes needed for the organization's ongoing success.

Regardless of the type of your organization – whether it's a provider of services, a distributor of goods, or a manufacturer – you're expected first of all to get results through people in order to operate at a profit. A not-for-profit organization is not profit driven, of course, but its purpose is to get results through people. Given limited human and financial resources, you must reach certain productivity goals. The nature of the "profit" takes different forms according to the nature of the organization, but the principle is the same:

"You are effective as a leader only when you manage the available resources to make the product or service worth more to the organization than the cost of producing it."

Although your personality characteristics and skills are important, your value to the organization can be measured only by how effectively you're fulfilling its mission and achieving cost-effective results.

- ◆ Your influence on team members. In addition to understanding your responsibility to the organization, you must also understand the needs and wants of the members of your work group. If you concentrate exclusively on your own needs and goals and neglect those of your team members, a deep rift in team relationships will



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develop. If you're achievement oriented, you may be tempted to boost your own self-esteem by downplaying the contributions made by other team members. But when other team members feel that their efforts have been ignored or that their value has gone unrecognized, they view themselves as relatively unimportant to the organization. Consequently, they feel less responsibility for being personally productive. Avoid this destructive pattern at all costs! Both you and your team members will enjoy the positive results of shared responsibility and recognition.

- ◆ Your influence on the work climate. When you adopt a no-limitations belief in the potential and worth of every individual, you begin coaching each team member with an enthusiasm that says, "You can do it!" Your confidence in them gives them maximum opportunity to grow, to meet their own needs, and to contribute to the success of your department or work group. When you believe in the ability of people to perform productively, your expectations become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

People tend to live up to what's expected of them by others, especially by those they consider authority figures. When you demonstrate that you believe your team members can succeed, they're willing to take more growth risks. A no-limitations belief in people also makes it easier for you to delegate various responsibilities and to trust your team members to get the help, resources, and training they may need to successfully complete the tasks you assign. When you demonstrate your confidence in their ability to perform and to succeed, they will accept the challenge more willingly and work harder to meet your expectations.

Attitudes and Actions Go Hand in Hand

Did you know that your actions come from attitudes? It's true! It's proven that increasing productivity may require you to reshape some of the attitudes that now dictate how you use time. Consider these time use practices that affect productivity and see how attitudes are involved:

▲ **Concentrate on high priority activities.** The quickest and most effective route to increasing productivity is to spend time on tasks that advance important goals. Make certain you spend your time on work that really matters; otherwise, you may be completely consumed by trivial details. Hours may be spent solving problems that can be solved by others. Respond to concerns expressed by various team members through empowering them to solve their own problems. This approach saves you valuable time and gives others the opportunity to develop commitment, a sense of ownership, and skill to solve significant problems. Help others spend their time on their high priority activities, and concentrate your time and effort on high priority activities that lead to the achievement of your goals.

▲ **Exercise self-discipline.** Self-discipline enables people to stay focused on a task and work on it until it is complete. Establish your priorities and then refuse to let distractions, interruptions, or happenings of the moment destroy your concentration. Discipline yourself to give tasks only the amount of time and effort they truly deserve from you, or delegate them to other appropriate team members. Either alternative requires thoughtful evaluation and consideration – and conscientious self-discipline. Perfectionists especially must learn to exert the self-discipline to delegate selected jobs to someone else who may not do the job quite as well as they would but who can still meet essential quality standards. How else will another learn to perform this job? In such cases, perfectionists must learn to accept less than perfection in the interest of increasing the contributions of others, creating new opportunities, and maintaining overall effectiveness and productivity.

▲ **Be persistent.** Careful planning and goal setting, determination to achieve, and recognizing the benefits of reaching a goal are all vital to personal productivity. This combination of factors enables one to be persistent, and

persistence is always characteristic of the successful individual. Many people eagerly take on new jobs, new responsibilities, and new assignments, starting with a great splash and making quick progress, but they soon lose momentum, never finishing the job. In contrast, productive people set definite goals, plan carefully, and concentrate their attention on the action required to meet each goal. Persistent individuals keep their goal in mind and work tenaciously toward it until they savor the success of achieving it.

▲ **Get started!** The best way to guarantee completion of a project is to get started on it – now! Two reasons account for failure to accomplish important jobs – people either never start, or they never finish. Both of these unproductive

time patterns fall under the debilitating umbrella of procrastination. Several patterns of faulty thinking account for most procrastination. Following these guidelines will enable you to avoid these pitfalls:

- Begin on required work and continue without relying on “feeling like it.” Getting started is often the most difficult part of a project; once begun, “inspiration” often follows. Thomas Edison, the famous American inventor, put it well when he said, “Genius is 1 percent inspiration and 99 percent perspiration.”

- Face the fact that some jobs will never be “easy” – now or later. Break the job down into logical steps to make it more manageable at each stage. Get started on the job, working in a systematic method, and you will enjoy a sense of mastery that enables you to complete the job!

▲ **Strive for results – not perfection.** Overemphasis on perfection nearly always renders negative consequences – immobilizing fear of making mistakes, discouragement, and preoccupation with what others think rather than genuine productivity. Productive people distinguish between what is important and what is not. They set aside a reasonable amount of time to accomplish a specific task; then they stick to their deadline. They recognize some tasks simply are not important enough to lavish too much time or effort on them. Even on genuinely significant projects truly productive individuals simply strive for results – not perfection.



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Bridging the Gap Between Potential and Performance

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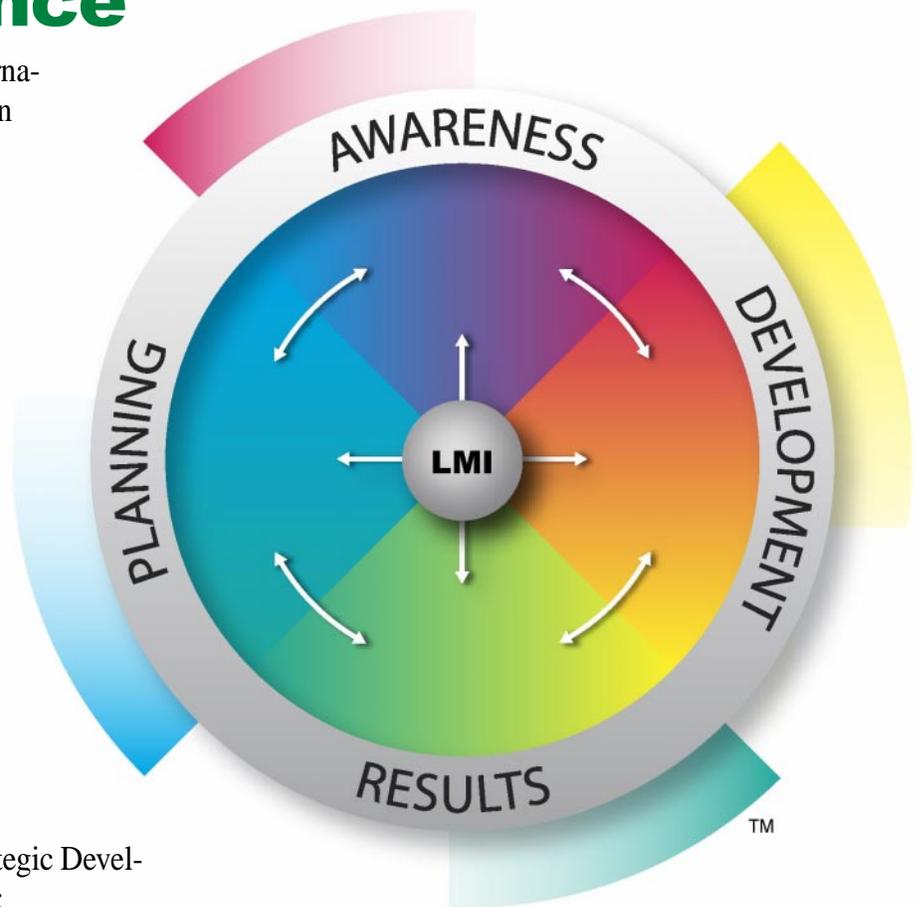
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