

The Characteristics of Success

Marva Collins, the legendary southern teacher, once stated that, "success doesn't come to you... you go to it". Fair enough. But what exactly is success? If it is measured solely by financial position, then what is the magic number that is equated with success? If it is measured in happiness, then what is the level of glee above which you are labeled a success? The issue then becomes one of defining success so that it can be viewed as a series of attributes that, when met, distinguish an individual or circumstance as successful.

Tudog has pondered this question a great deal both so that it can measure its own performance and so that it can understand the dreams and objectives of its clients. We have concluded the following about success.

1. Success is About Intent

Like art, intent has an awful lot to do with defining success because the original objectives serve as the measurement of accomplishment. Is someone who sets out to build a small profitable company – and does it – any less successful than someone with more ambitious goals who builds a larger business? To some people, the small profitable business is enough and they do not seek to grow any larger because they don't want to sacrifice the trade-offs greater financial reward would demand. So in this sense, the achievement of success is defined by what you set out to do.

2. Success is About Choices

There is an expression that timing is everything. This is almost true. The truth is that timing needs to be accompanied by an ability to recognize the opportunities before you and the good judgment to make the right choices. In some sense good leadership is about choices, as is good planning. Certainly we should not be leaving out good luck, although one can debate whether that is up to the Heaven's or a function of what we create for ourselves. In all manifestations, choices – creating them, recognizing them, and taking advantage of them – is a function of success. And the better you deal with choices, the more successful (within the parameters of your intent) you will become.

3. Success is About Involvement

Success is about being intimately involved in your endeavor, making certain that you are familiar with every aspect of your operations. This is not only so that you can deal with obstacles and challenges that may pop up, but also so that you can demonstrate your participation, knowledge, concern, and care to others. It is no mistake that you find the CEO of Jet Blue serving passengers, or the CEO of Starbucks making coffee. They are demonstrating their involvement, which sends a dynamic and encouraging message to everyone involved with the company (employees, customers, competitors, investors).

4. Success is About Passion

To truly succeed you have to love what you're doing. Sure you might do well financially, but if you hated the ride to riches have you truly succeeded? That would, most likely, depend on how broad a definition of success you embrace. For us, to be truly successful

you need to have a burning passion for what you do, a sense that it matters and will make the world a better place (even if only by improving the lives of a limited number of people), and that you were meant to be doing what you're doing. With this passion you will find energy, excitement, ambition, satisfaction, joy, and peace. All attributes of success to us.

5. Success is About You

In order to truly succeed you need to stick with who you are, There are personality types that are more effective interacting with people, and other types that are best behind a desk. There is no judgment here of better or worse. You are what you are. You need to understand where you are most suited and direct your efforts and energies in the direction that is most appropriate for you. Not only will you find yourself able to perform better, you will also be happy, more able to muster passion, more anxious to be (and stay) involved, and more aware of your choices and options. In other words, part of success is knowing yourself and placing yourself in situations most likely to bring the best of you to the forefront.

Success comes in all sizes and shapes. The most important thing about your success is how satisfied you are with where you are. If you want more, you need to go after it. If you are pleased with your life, then you are successful, regardless of the size of your bank account.